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CORRESPONDENCE

RELATING TO THE

AFFAIRS OF SYRIA.

10

1860-61.

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CONFIDENTIAL.

CORRESPONDENCE

RELATING TO THE

A F F A I R S O F S Y R I A .

1860—61.

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CONFIDENTIAL.Correspondence relating to the Pacification of Syria:
1860–61.

No. 1.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received July 6.)

(No. 839.)

My Lord,

Paris, July 5, 1860.

I RECEIVED this morning a note from M. Thouvenel, requesting to see me as soon as possible, as the mail from Syria had brought him very afflicting intelligence.

On waiting on his Excellency, he read me various reports which had reached him from Damascus and Beyrout, varying in date from the 16th to the 21st ultimo, giving accounts of the massacres and horrors which the Christian population of the Lebanon, and more particularly the inhabitants of Rasheya and Zahlé, had undergone at the hands of the Druses and Bedouin Arabs, under the eyes of the Turkish Authorities, without any protection from, if not with the connivance of, the latter.

As the Consuls of the Five Powers at Beyrout seem to have acted in complete accord, your Lordship will no doubt have received information direct from thence. The reports which have reached the French Government appear to be founded on information given by fugitive Christians alone. It is to be hoped, therefore, that there may be some exaggeration in them. Still, if but a tenth part be true, enough has occurred to excite universal reprobation, while the inability of the Turkish Authorities to maintain order and tranquillity is clearly shown in the Minutes of the proceedings of the Consular Body at Beyrout.

M. Thouvenel was much moved while reading these reports to me. He said that it would be impossible to leave matters in this state in Syria; that when the horrible treatment to which the Christian populations had been exposed came to be known, there would be but one cry of indignation in France. Neither sex nor age had been spared; priests, women, and children, had been indiscriminately slain; the convents had been plundered, and the Sovereign Authority being impotent, or unwilling to act, there was no saying what the next intelligence might bring. The arrangement of 1845 ought not to be considered a dead-letter, and authorized the interference of Europe. It might be impossible for either France or England to send troops to restore order; but no doubt their ships-of-war would be able to protect their Consular Officers, and such of their subjects as resided on the coast; but this would not be sufficient. Might not a Commission from the Five Powers be sent into the disturbed districts; and if it was found that the Porte was unable to furnish the force necessary to restore order, might not the Sultan be invited to ask for troops from the Viceroy of Egypt.

I said that I felt sure that Her Majesty's Government would deplore, as much as could the Imperial Government, the horrible excesses and atrocities which had been committed, and would be most ready to join with the Imperial Government in taking measures to insure an efficient protection of the Christian inhabitants of the Lebanon, and a better administration of the Government of Syria. But I must add, not however with a wish of palliating the conduct either of the Turkish Authorities or of the Druses, that it was Sir H. Bulwer's

opinion that the latter had received considerable provocation from the Maronites. With respect to the measures to be taken, I could not, I said, venture to give an opinion, further than to remark, that I doubted whether Her Majesty's Government would approve the notion of asking assistance of the Viceroy of Egypt. It was to be hoped, I added, that the reinforcements which it was known had been sent from Constantinople, would be found sufficient to restore order and tranquillity, and it was to be presumed, that if any benefit could be hoped from the presence of a Commission named by the Five Powers, the Representatives at Constantinople would already have taken the step of sending one.

M. Thouvenel replied, that he had inquired, by telegraph, of the Marquis de Lavalette, whether any intelligence of these events had reached Constantinople, and, if so, what measures had been taken by the Five Powers? His Excellency admitted that there were grave objections to employing the troops of the Viceroy of Egypt in Syria. Still, he said, that it was to be apprehended that, in the present penury of the Turkish Treasury, the Porte would be unable to send such reinforcements as would be necessary (he considered those already sent would prove insufficient); and then what other course, he asked, would be open?

It appears, from the French reports, that a further consequence of these atrocities will be a scarcity, from the destruction or non-cultivation of the crops. The fugitives who have escaped the massacres are in a state of the greatest destitution, and are supported by rations and money given by the French Consular Agents.

M. Thouvenel will send to London copies of the reports which he has received.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

No. 2.

Lord J. Russell to Earl Cowley.

(No. 669A.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, July 6, 1860.

I HAVE to inform your Excellency that Her Majesty's Government will press on the Porte the necessity of using the utmost efforts to repress the disturbances in Syria; but we shall advise the Sultan not to call for assistance from the Viceroy of Egypt, who is aiming at independence.

A British squadron will be sent to the coast of Syria, and, if necessary, marines will be landed.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 3.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received July 10.)

(No. 852.)

My Lord,

Paris, July 9, 1860.

WITH reference to the telegram, repeated in your Lordship's despatch No. 672 of the 6th instant, stating that Her Majesty's Government could not advise the Porte to ask the assistance of the Viceroy of Egypt to restore order in Syria, but that Her Majesty's Government would direct a squadron to be sent to the coast of Syria, and marines to be landed, if necessary, I have the honour to state that M. Thouvenel seems satisfied at the decision taken by the Porte to send Fuad Pasha, with extraordinary powers, to that country.

The French Government have also directed two men-of-war to proceed to the coast of Syria.

The instructions to the Officers commanding enjoin them to endeavour to act in concert with the men-of-war of any other nation which they may meet.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

No. 4.

Lord J. Russell to Sir H. Bulwer.

(No. 305.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, July 10, 1860.

I HAVE to acquaint your Excellency that Her Majesty's Government entirely approve the course which you have followed with regard to the disastrous state of things in Syria.

The first and most important object is to put an end to bloodshed and the destruction of property, and to restore tranquillity and order in that province; and you will, in concert with the Representatives at Constantinople of the other Great Powers, continue to press the Porte to make every exertion and take every measure to put an end to the present deplorable state of affairs there.

Her Majesty's Government, on the 9th instant, directed the Vice-Admiral commanding Her Majesty's Naval Forces in the Mediterranean to proceed forthwith to the coast of Syria, and have ordered him to act with Her Majesty's Consuls in affording protection to the lives and property of Christians; and in execution of this duty to land the marines from the ships under his command, if such a measure should be necessary.

Her Majesty's Government understand that the French Government has also sent ships of war to the Syrian coast with a similar object.

I have further to inform your Excellency, that Her Majesty's Government are in communication with the other Powers of Europe on the subject of the outbreak in Syria.

You will communicate to the Porte so much of this despatch as will be sufficient to evince the importance which Her Majesty's Government attach to the preservation of life on the coast of Syria, and their intention to co-operate with other Powers.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 5.

Lord J. Russell to Mr. Erskine.

(No. 17.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, July 12, 1860.

I RECEIVED your telegram of yesterday, informing me that Prince Gortchakoff had expressed great satisfaction at the communication which you were instructed by my telegram of the 10th instant to make to his Excellency in regard to the disturbances in Syria.

In reply to Prince Gortchakoff's inquiry as to what measures are contemplated by Her Majesty's Government, I have to instruct you to state to his Excellency, that for the present Her Majesty's Government propose to assist the Turkish Government in protecting British subjects and Christians residing on the coast from massacre.

By this means we trust that Fuad Pasha may be relieved from the necessity of opposing the Druses on the coast, and may be enabled at once to send succour to Damascus, where the lives of all Christians, and amongst them of Her Majesty's Consul and other British subjects, are in imminent danger.

Measures for the general and permanent pacification of Syria must be settled at Constantinople by the Representatives of the Great Powers.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

M. Thouvenel to Count Persigny.—(Communicated to Lord J. Russell by Count Persigny, July 17, 1860.)

M. le Comte,

Paris, le 16 Juillet, 1860.

LES événements qui viennent de se passer dans le Liban ont, comme nous devions nous y attendre, profondément ému l'opinion et tous les Cabinets ont compris qu'ils leur créaient des devoirs. Tous se sont empressés de fournir à leurs Agents sur les lieux les moyens en leur pouvoir pour protéger les populations Chrétiennes, et il est à espérer que ces moyens, combinés avec l'envoi des troupes Ottomanes mises à la disposition de Fuad Pacha, suffiront pour arrêter au moins l'effusion du sang. Mais, après de pareilles scènes et une semblable perturbation dans tous les rapports, il ne suffit pas, pour satisfaire aux principes de justice et d'ordre et pour rétablir un état de choses durable, de comprimer l'insurrection et d'obliger les Druses à déposer les armes. La situation exige des mesures propres, à la fois, à réparer d'effroyables calamités et à en prévenir le retour.

Dans cette seconde partie de la tâche, les Puissances, M. le Comte, ne paraissent avoir un rôle tracé d'avance par les antécédents de la question. Les contestations entre les Maronites et les Druses, bien qu'elles n'aient point encore peut-être présenté un tel caractère d'acharnement et pris des proportions aussi fâcheuses, ont déjà, à diverses époques, occupé les Cabinets; et l'arrangement de 1845, destiné à régler le régime administratif dans le Liban, est le résultat d'un accord conclu entre eux et la Porte. Cet arrangement se trouve aujourd'hui méconnu par les Druses; et les Puissances qui en avaient arrêté les conditions et les termes avec le Gouvernement Ottoman sont, par cela même, naturellement appelées à examiner de concert avec lui, les causes auxquelles il convient d'en attribuer la violation ainsi que les dispositions qu'il peut y avoir lieu d'y substituer. La Porte n'a jamais fait difficulté d'admettre les bons offices de la diplomatie dans les conflits qui ont successivement éclaté entre les populations du Liban, et l'accord que nous jugeons indispensable ne constituerait nullement une innovation ou une acte d'intervention dont on aurait à redouter l'effet pour la considération ou l'indépendance de la Turquie. Il serait conforme aux précédents et l'on n'y pourrait voir qu'une conséquence logique d'une entente antérieure à laquelle la Porte elle-même a prêté les mains et qu'elle doit désirer de maintenir parcequ'elle y trouvera un moyen de donner à de nouveaux arrangements toute l'autorité nécessaire.

Pour se former une idée exacte des faits accomplis et des nécessités de la situation, la voie à suivre me semble indiquée par la nature des choses. Les Puissances ne seraient pas suffisamment éclairées sur les difficultés et les besoins dont il faut tenir compte, si l'on ne procédait par voie d'examen sur les lieux et d'enquête collective. Le Gouvernement de l'Empereur jugerait donc utile l'institution d'une Commission formée de Délégués des Puissances et de la Porte. Cette Commission serait envoyée dans le Liban pour rechercher les circonstances qui ont provoqué les derniers conflits, déterminer la part de responsabilité des chefs de l'insurrection et des agents de l'administration locale, ainsi que les réparations dues aux victimes, et enfin, étudier pour les soumettre à l'approbation de leurs Gouvernements et de la Porte les dispositions qui pourraient être adoptées en vue de conjurer de nouveaux malheurs.

Si, comme l'accord qui s'est établi spontanément dans les appréciations de toutes les Cours à la nouvelle des massacres du Liban me donne lieu de l'espérer, elles approuvaient cette idée, elles auraient entre les mains tous les éléments nécessaires pour concerter avec la Porte un arrangement qui, résultant d'un examen approfondi et réunissant une adhésion unanime, offrirait toutes les chances possibles de durée.

C'est donc avec confiance, M. le Comte, que je vous invite à faire part de cette proposition au Principal Secrétaire d'Etat de Sa Majesté Britannique: j'adresse la même communication aux Cours de St. Pétersbourg, de Vienne, et de Berlin. De tous temps la sollicitude de la France s'est exercée dans le Liban. C'est une tradition que le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté ne saurait répudier. Elle nous imposait le devoir d'accomplir cette démarche auprès des Puissances. Toutefois, en prenant l'initiative dans les circonstances présentes,

nous ne sommes dirigés par aucune vue particulière, ni par le désir préconçu de poursuivre en faveur de l'une des deux populations entre lesquelles le conflit s'est élevé aucun avantage exclusif. Nous ne nous proposons d'autre objet que de concourir avec les Puissances, et au même titre, dans l'intérêt de la paix de l'Orient, à rétablir le calme et l'ordre sur un point où ils ne peuvent être troublés sans la mettre sérieusement en danger.

Vous voudrez bien donner lecture de cette dépêche à Lord John Russell et lui en remettre copie.

Agréer, &c.
(Signé) THOUVENEL.

Lord J. Russell to Sir H. Bulwer.

(No. 326.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, July 17, 1860.

THE French Government are desirous of proposing to the Turkish Government that a Commission of Delegates from the Porte and from the Great Powers should be sent to the Lebanon, for the purpose of investigating the circumstances attending the recent acts of violence which have been committed in that district.

This Commission would have for its object to determine the responsibility of all persons concerned in those proceedings; to consider what compensation or punishment may be due, and finally to submit to the Sultan their opinion upon the measures best calculated to prevent further calamities.

Her Majesty's Government agree to this proposal, and I have accordingly to instruct you to give it your support.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

Mr. Erskine to Lord J. Russell.—(Received July 18.)

(No. 36.)

My Lord,

St. Petersburg, July 11, 1860.

I HAD the honour late last night to receive your Lordship's telegram, directing me to apprise the Russian Government that a British squadron was about to visit the coast of Syria, in consequence of the recent massacre of Christians in that province.

This morning I went down to Peterhoff, where Prince Gortchakoff is now in attendance on the Emperor, and informed his Excellency that Her Majesty's Government were ready to concert measures with the Government of Russia for the protection of their respective subjects and the Christian population in those parts. He could scarcely conceal the triumph with which he received this communication, and told me that he was sure the whole world would sooner or later admit that he had not at all overstated the grievances under which the Christian subjects of the Porte were now suffering.

As I did not see any advantage in provoking a discussion on this point, I refrained from reminding his Excellency that the atrocities which had called forth the animadversion of Her Majesty's Government had nothing in common with the alleged state of normal misrule in Bulgaria, Bosnia, &c., which had led to the mission of the Grand Vizier; and contented myself with observing that the same frankness, and the same determination to protect the Christians in Turkey which had induced Her Majesty's Government to reprobate these atrocities, and to send a squadron to Syria, ought to satisfy his Excellency that Great Britain would be equally firm in compelling Turkey to do justice to her Christian subjects, in case it should be proved beyond the possibility of doubt that they were really exposed to the ill-treatment to which he had called the attention of Europe.

Prince Gortchakoff eventually promised to take the Emperor's orders upon

this subject, and desired me to say to your Lordship that he had no doubt the Imperial Government would willingly assent to your Lordship's proposal to act in concert. It would, however, be desirable that he should be placed in possession of your Lordship's views without delay, as to the course it would be desirable to follow. For his own part, he was afraid that the harm was already done, and that any intervention of the Allied Powers would come too late to be of much use to the unfortunate Christians in Syria.

I have, &c.
(Signed) E. M. ERSKINE.

No. 9.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received July 18.)

(No. 916. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Paris, July 17, 1860.

YOUR Lordship will probably have received, before this despatch reaches you, communication of a despatch addressed yesterday by M. Thouvenel to M. de Persigny, on the subject of the present state of affairs in the Lebanon. A similar despatch has been transmitted to the Courts of the other Great Powers. The object of it is to propose that a Mixed Commission should be sent into the Lebanon, with the object of restoring tranquillity, inquiring into the origin of the late excesses, and punishing the authors of it.

When M. Thouvenel's despatch was written, the disastrous news from Damascus, which has since reached this Government, and which I had the honour to transmit to your Lordship this morning, by telegraph, had not arrived.

I saw M. Thouvenel this afternoon. He had just returned from St. Cloud, where he had been in consequence of the fresh intelligence to which I have adverted. He said that he had had a long conversation with the Emperor on this subject, and that both felt that the state of affairs in Syria required a more active intervention on the part of Europe. Public opinion would not brook the continued supineness of Europe in presence of such disasters. It was clear that the Porte had no authority left, and that the whole country was in a state of anarchy.

I asked M. Thouvenel whether he had any particular plan to propose. He replied that he would propose nothing, because he felt that, in the present state of affairs in Europe, any proposition coming from France would be suspected. He felt further, that there was no plan which could be proposed which would not be fairly open to some objection or other. He intimated, however, the opinion that foreign troops might be sent and disembarked at different points along the coast of the disturbed districts. It would not be difficult for England, Austria, and France, to send detachments for that purpose.

I remarked that we ought well to weigh the consequences of such a proceeding; that the precedent of disembarking British, Austrian, and French troops, in order to restore order in Syria, might be quoted by Russia, whenever the latter might think it expedient to send troops into the European Provinces of Turkey.

M. Thouvenel repeated that no proposal which could be made could be free from all objection. He meant, of course, that the consent of the Powers should be asked before any occupation of Turkish soil should take place. He considered that the very fact of disembarking a few troops would strike terror into the aggressors, and restore confidence to the Christian populations. If some course of this kind was not adopted, it was his deliberate conviction that, before long, the Turkish Empire would collapse.

Although what I have stated passed in the light of conversation only, I could see that M. Thouvenel was anxious that I should repeat these details to your Lordship, in order to ascertain your opinion and that of Her Majesty's Government on his suggestion.

He said further, that it seemed to him the time was come when the affairs of Turkey must become the object of a Conference, not that he would

propose one, for the same reason which he had already stated. Any such proposal, coming from him, would be viewed with suspicion; and he was much afraid that such would be its fate were it made by any other Great Power, except Prussia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

No. 10.

Mr. Erskine to Lord J. Russell.—(Received July 20.)

(No. 39.)

My Lord,

St. Petersburg, July 14, 1860.

ON my communicating to Prince Gortchakoff the substance of your Lordship's telegram of the 12th instant, stating that for the present Her Majesty's Government merely contemplated protecting British subjects and the Christians on the coast of Syria, and that more permanent measures of pacification must be concerted at Constantinople, his Excellency desired me to acquaint your Lordship that he would willingly send instructions in this sense to the Russian Envoy in Turkey. The officer in command of the only Russian vessel of war on the coast of Syria would, he added, be prepared to co-operate, if necessary, with the British naval force, without any fresh orders from hence, but he also should be directed to consult with the officer in command of Her Majesty's squadron as to the best mode of affording protection to the European residents and Christians.

Prince Gortchakoff, however, again urged me to give him some more definite notion as to the character of the "further and permanent measures" which Her Majesty's Government had in view. I replied, that it was probably as difficult for your Lordship as it would be for his Excellency to determine at this distance what remedy would be most applicable to a state of things which was constantly varying, and with which you could be but imperfectly acquainted, and that it was quite obvious that what Her Majesty's Government proposed was, that the Representatives of the Great Powers at Constantinople should endeavour to devise some scheme for the pacification of Syria, which would, if necessary, be submitted for approval to their respective Governments.

Prince Gortchakoff then agreed to authorize Prince Lobanoff to confer with his colleagues as desired by your Lordship; but he requested me to repeat to Her Majesty's Government that no lasting impression would be made upon Turkey until it was manifest that the Representatives of the Great Powers were both in earnest and unanimous.

I availed myself of this opportunity to quote to his Excellency an expression in your Lordship's despatch No. 618 of the 19th ultimo to Lord Cowley, viz., that "without energetic and united action at Constantinople on the part of the Great Powers, it would be difficult, if not impossible, to prevent a catastrophe in the Ottoman Empire." Prince Gortchakoff appeared to be much gratified at this coincidence of opinion with Her Majesty's Government, and asked me whether I could not induce your Lordship to give him this statement in some shape in which he could show it to the Emperor, who was impressed with the belief that Her Majesty's Government were not sufficiently alive to the real state of the Turkish Empire, and to the serious dangers arising from the dissensions of the rival Embassies at Constantinople.

I have accordingly ventured to ask your Lordship's authority, by telegraph, to give Prince Gortchakoff a copy of the despatch in question. It would be merely an act of courtesy, as he is most probably already in possession of the views entertained by Her Majesty's Government through the French Ambassador at this Court.

I have, &c.
(Signed) E. M. ERSKINE.

M. Thouvenel to Count Persigny.—(Communicated to Lord J. Russell by Count Persigny, July 20.)

M. le Comte,

Paris, le 17 Juillet, 1860.

L'AMBASSADEUR de l'Empereur à Constantinople m'a adressé au sujet des événements de Damas, la dépêche télégraphique ci-jointe qui confirme celle dont M. le Ministre de la Marine m'avait fait connaître la substance. Ainsi se sont réalisées pour cette ville les craintes dont je vous entretenais il y a déjà quelques jours. Cette guerre impitoyable faite aux Chrétiens prend des proportions dont il devient difficile de prévoir l'étendu, et les Cabinets ne répondraient point aux justes exigences de l'opinion publique s'ils n'adoptaient, autant qu'il dépend d'eux, toutes les mesures propres à arrêter les progrès de ces scènes de carnage. La Porte semble avoir elle-même un juste sentiment de cette situation. J'en trouve la preuve dans une lettre que le Sultan adresse à Sa Majesté Impériale, et que ce Souverain a fait communiquer à M. le Ministre De Lavalette pour être transmise par le télégraphe. Je joins également ici la copie de ce message, et vous verrez que le Sultan a dû écrire dans des termes analogues à Sa Majesté Britannique.

Toutefois il n'est pas moins nécessaire d'agir avec autant de promptitude que d'énergie, et comme il y a malheureusement lieu de craindre que les moyens d'action de la Porte ne répondent pas à ses intentions, je doute qu'elle put satisfaire aux nécessités d'une situation si grave si les Puissances ne s'entendaient pour lui venir en aide.

L'ordre donné aux Commandants des escadres de mettre leurs équipages à la disposition des Consuls ne peut pas permettre d'atteindre l'insurrection dans son foyer, au sein du Liban, ni surtout dans les villes de l'intérieur qu'elle a déjà envahies ou qu'elle menace. Un corps de troupes mis à portée d'agir selon les circonstances serait seul en mesure de suffire à cette tâche. A tous les points de vue, il pourrait exercer une heureuse influence, non seulement à raison du concours éventuel qu'il prêterait aux troupes Turques, mais par l'autorité morale que sa seule présence, en rassurant les populations, ne manquerait pas d'avoir sur l'attitude et la conduite des fonctionnaires Ottomans eux-mêmes.

Cette combinaison, d'ailleurs, ne pourrait recevoir son exécution que de concert avec la Porte, et il serait en outre essentiel qu'elle fût le résultat d'un accord évident des Cinq Cours. L'intervention serait ainsi collective dans son principe, et les troupes Européennes, envoyées dans des vues communes, ne feraient, en quelque sorte, que remplir une délégation des Puissances.

Si le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Britannique entrait dans cette ordre d'idées, il serait sans doute possible de concerter, sans retard, une entente avec les autres Cabinets et la Porte, et d'aviser aux moyens les plus prompts d'obtenir les satisfactions dues à l'humanité et de concourir au rétablissement de la paix en Syrie.

Ce résultat, M. le Comte, serait important, non pas seulement pour la conscience publique et pour les Chrétiens, mais aussi pour la Porte, qui dans l'état de crise où se trouvent son administration et ses finances ne supporterait pas longtemps sans péril l'épreuve d'une insurrection aussi étendue à comprimer. C'est une considération qui n'échappera pas à la prévoyance du Cabinet Anglais. Quant à nous, nous pensons qu'une combinaison de la nature de celle sur laquelle je viens de vous exprimer notre manière de voir, peut être adoptée avec avantage. Je ne m'en dissimule pas les inconvénients, mais l'abstention en aurait assurément de beaucoup plus grands en présence des complications que menacent de surgir.

Je vous prie de faire part à Lord John Russell de l'opinion du Gouvernement de Sa Majesté et d'en conférer avec lui. En raison de l'urgence, qui n'est que trop attestée par les événements, je vous serai obligé de me faire savoir le plus tôt possible ce que le Cabinet Anglais pense à ce sujet et quelles sont ses intentions.

Agréé, &c.
(Signé) THOUVENEL.

The Marquis de Lavalette to M. Thouvenel.

(Télégraphique.)

Péra, le 15 Juillet, 1860.

IL résulte d'une dépêche télégraphique transmise à Beyrouth à la date du 11 Juillet, par le Commandant La Roncière au Commandant de l'Ajaccio, que le massacre des Chrétiens a commencé à Damas le 9 de ce mois; qu'un grand nombre d'hommes ont été tués et que les femmes sont emmenées en esclavage; les Consuls sont brûlés sauf celui d'Angleterre; les Consuls de France, de Russie, et de Grèce, sont réfugiés chez Abd-el-Kader.

L'attitude des autorités Turques a été nulle.

The Marquis de Lavalette to M. Thouvenel.

(Télégraphique.)

Péra, le 17 Juillet, 1860.

J'AI l'honneur d'envoyer à votre Excellence la traduction d'une lettre autographe que le Sultan écrit à l'Empereur et qu'il me prie de transmettre à Sa Majesté par le télégraphe; j'envoie l'original par le courrier:—

" Palais de Dolma-Badjé, le 16 Juillet.

" Je tiens à ce que votre Majesté sache bien avec quelle douleur j'ai appris les événements de Syrie. Qu'elle soit convaincue que j'emploierai toutes mes forces pour y rétablir l'ordre et la sécurité, punir sévèrement les coupables, quels qu'ils soient, et rendre justice à tous. Pour qu'il ne puisse y avoir aucun doute sur les intentions de mon Gouvernement, c'est à mon Ministre des Affaires Etrangères, dont les principes sont connus de votre Majesté, que j'ai voulu confier cette importante mission."

Le Sultan écrit également à la Reine d'Angleterre. Sir H. Bulwer a été prévenu de l'envoi d'une corvette. Envoyez-vous celle que j'avais demandée?

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received July 20.)

(No. 924.)

My Lord,

Paris, July 19, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to inclose herewith to your Lordship, extracted from the "Moniteur" of this day, a letter which the Sultan has addressed by telegraph to the Emperor of the French, on the subject of the late events in Syria.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

The Sultan to the Emperor of the French, July 16, 1860.

[See Inclosure 2 in No. 11.]

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—Received July 20.)

(No. 925.)

My Lord,

Paris, July 19, 1860.

A DESPATCH, dated the 2nd instant, from the French Consul at Damascus, if it is to be relied upon, shows that the attack upon that town, which took place some days later, was connived at by Ahmet Pasha, the Turkish Governor, and that it was then known that the intention of that functionary was to profit by the opportunity to destroy every Christian in the place, by a general bombardment of the town from the citadel; he having sworn revenge against all Christians, for the death of his father at their hands, some thirty years ago.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received July 20.)

(No. 926.)

My Lord,

Paris, July 19, 1860.

YOUR Lordship will, no doubt, have received from Her Majesty's Consular Officers in Syria detailed accounts of the horrible events which have been passing there. M. Thouvenel read to me this afternoon the reports which had just reached him, and which recount a series of events, the atrocity of which is only to be equalled by the perfidy and treachery which marked the proceedings of the perpetrators.

The connivance of the Turkish Authorities and soldiers in the massacres of the Christians can hardly be doubted.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received July 20.)

(No. 927.)

My Lord,

Paris, July 19, 1860.

I CALLED on M. Thouvenel this afternoon, with the intention of communicating to him the substance of your Lordship's telegram of 8.30 P.M. yesterday, stating that Her Majesty's Government will not object to the landing of French or Austrian troops in Syria, if necessary, according to the terms of a Convention to be agreed upon between the Porte and the Allied Powers; that Her Majesty's Government would not furnish British troops, but would have a strong force of Marines on the coast.

I found that M. Thouvenel was already, through M. de Persigny, in possession of the opinions of Her Majesty's Government, but that they had been given more strongly than in your Lordship's telegram to me. M. de Persigny represents your Lordship to have approved the notion of sending French troops to Syria, and to have said that they might be sent while the Convention was negotiating.

On the receipt last evening of M. de Persigny's telegram, announcing this, M. Thouvenel addressed a telegram simultaneously to the Governments of Austria, Prussia, Russia, and the Porte, mentioning the communications which had passed between Paris and London, and asking the assent of those Governments to the conclusion of a Convention by their respective Representatives at Constantinople.

If the answer returned shall prove favourable, that is, if the different Governments accept the principle contained in the French proposals, a corps of French troops will be immediately embarked and directed on Syria.

M. Thouvenel has prepared a draft of Convention, which will be

transmitted to-night to M. de Persigny for your Lordship's information. The preamble declares the intention of the Sultan to put an end to the disorders which reign in Syria, and the readiness of the Great Powers to co-operate with him for that purpose, and the Articles provide for the sending of a European force, which M. Thouvenel conceives should consist of 10,000 men, the whole of which France will furnish, if necessary; for an understanding between the commander of that force and the commander of the Turkish forces in Syria; for the co-operation of the other Powers of Europe by sea; and leaves it to a further understanding between the Porte and the Powers to establish the exact objects of the expedition, and the period when it shall be withdrawn. A final Article saddles the Porte with the expenses of the expedition, but in the present state of the Turkish finances M. Thouvenel was uncertain whether or no he would have it inserted.

It is, however, to be apprehended that the Porte may object to foreign troops being landed in Syria, in which case M. Thouvenel says that the Powers will have to take counsel as to the course they shall pursue. At all events, it seems to be the intention of the French Government to order the departure of troops, if the Great Powers consent to the principle of the proposed expedition, even should the Porte object, leaving the resistance of the Porte to be overcome by their Representatives at Constantinople, it being clear that if the Powers are agreed to press the Porte in the matter, it will soon yield to that pressure.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

Lord J. Russell to Earl Cowley.

(No. 714.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, July 21, 1860.

HER Majesty's Government have learnt by a telegram from Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, that peace was concluded on the 10th instant, between the Maronites and Druses.

If this information be correct, Her Majesty's Government are of opinion that the expedition of troops to Syria, as contemplated by the French Government, will be unnecessary; and that, therefore, if the project be not entirely abandoned, it should at least be deferred.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received July 21.)

(No. 931.)

My Lord,

Paris, July 20, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to inclose herewith to your Lordship, extracted from the "Moniteur" of this day, an article stating that the Imperial Government has placed itself in communication with the other Cabinets of Europe, with regard to the measures to be undertaken in concert with them, in reference to Syria.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

Extract from the "Moniteur" of July 20, 1860.

EN présence des déplorables événements dont la Syrie est le théâtre et qui causent, à si juste titre, en Europe, l'émotion la plus profonde, le Gouverne-

ment de l'Empereur a cru devoir faire connaître sans retard ses impressions aux autres Cabinets et à la Porte, et provoquer l'adoption en commun des mesures exigées par les circonstances.

No. 18.

Lord A. Loftus to Lord J. Russell.—(Received July 23.)

(No. 408.)

My Lord,

Vienna, July 19, 1860.

ON waiting on Count Rechberg on Monday last, his Excellency informed me that he had just received the sad intelligence of serious disturbances having occurred at Damascus, and that a dreadful massacre of the Christians in that city had taken place. His Excellency was not then informed whether these excesses had been committed by the Druses or by the Mahomedan population, or by both.

The report he had received, however, stated that the American Consul had been wounded, and that the Dutch Consul had been killed.

His Excellency expressed his indignant horror at this barbarous outrage, and his anxious desire to co-operate in any measures to arrest cruelties so revolting to the feelings of humanity.

His Excellency informed me that the Emperor had decided to send a frigate to the coast of Syria for the protection of Austrian subjects and of the Christian population; and that orders had been given to the Commander to proceed thither without delay.

His Excellency further stated, that the Austrian Commander was instructed to concert with the Commander of Her Majesty's naval forces, and to act in complete unison with him.

His Excellency expressed a desire to be informed of the instructions given by Her Majesty's Government to the Admiral in command of Her Majesty's squadron, in order that similar instructions may be addressed to the Commander of the Austrian frigate.

I beg to inclose to your Lordship herewith a translation by Mr. Dillon of the announcement in the "Donau Zeitung" (the organ of the Imperial Government), notifying the intended departure of the Austrian frigate for the coast of Syria, and the object for which it was sent.

I have, &c.

(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

Inclosure in No. 18.

Extract from the "Donau Zeitung."

(Translation.)

HIS Majesty's screw-frigate "Radetzky," Captain Tegethof, Commander, has received orders to sail immediately for the coast of Syria, to operate in conjunction with the ships of the Maritime Powers, for the protection of the Christian population, and in the interest of Austrian subjects. As an understanding exists among the Powers as to the object of the measures, there is reason to hope that in spite of the latest most lamentable intelligence from the Levant, the peace of Europe will not be threatened from this side.

No. 19.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received July 23.)

(No. 939.)

My Lord,

Paris, July 22, 1860.

I COULD only see M. Thouvenel for a few minutes this afternoon on the subject of your Lordship's telegram dated 6.45 yesterday.

I informed his Excellency that intelligence had been received on the 20th

instant at Constantinople, of the conclusion of peace between the Druses and the Maronites on the 10th instant, and that your Lordship was of opinion, that if this news should prove true, the French expedition to Syria should be deferred or abandoned.

M. Thouvenel said that he was not in possession of any intelligence which would confirm the news received by your Lordship. On the contrary, the French Government were in the receipt of advices from Beyrout up to the 12th instant, which made no mention of any suspension of hostilities between the Druses and Maronites, and yet if this had occurred on the 10th, it ought to have been known at Beyrout on the 12th.

It was possible, however, that peace might have been concluded, but even should that be the case, he could not agree with your Lordship, if it was your opinion that peace would render all further intervention unnecessary.

"For in fact," asked his Excellency, "what was this peace? It would turn out to be nothing more than the submission of the Maronites to the Druses, to save themselves from further massacre. But what reparation would they have for all the losses inflicted upon them? According to the accounts received by the Imperial Government, above 10,000 Christians had perished. Was nothing to be done to prevent a repetition of such horrors?"

I said that Her Majesty's Government had consented to the Commission of Inquiry proposed by the French Government, and would, I was sure, co-operate in making its labours useful, and as the Porte had now a large force in Syria, that would probably be sufficient to preserve tranquillity during the proceedings of the Commission.

M. Thouvenel said that the presence of a Turkish force might impose a suspension of hostilities on the Christians, but that it was his conviction that no justice would be done the latter except under the presence of a foreign force.

At all events he could say nothing on the subject of your Lordship's telegram, until he should be better acquainted with the terms on which peace had been concluded, if, indeed, it had been concluded at all.

I have, &c.

(Signed) COWLEY.

No. 20.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received July 23.)

(No. 940.)

My Lord,

Paris, July 22, 1860.

WHILE I was with M. Thouvenel this afternoon, he read me a telegram dated yesterday, which he had received this morning from the French Ambassador at Constantinople.

The substance is as follows:—

That M. de Lavalette had not received M. Thouvenel's despatch, proposing a Convention between the Porte and the Great Powers for the pacification of Syria until 4 P.M. yesterday; that he had been with Ali Pasha in the morning to speak to him on the critical position of affairs at Constantinople; that that Minister had fully admitted the desperate situation in which they found themselves, bursting into tears and declaring, that unless the Porte could immediately find an advance of fifty millions of francs, they were lost; that on the receipt of M. Thouvenel's above-mentioned despatch, he (M. Lavalette) had returned to Ali Pasha; that that Minister had evinced considerable emotion on hearing the contents of it; that he had said he could give no official answer without consulting his colleagues, and taking the Sultan's orders; but that it was his conviction that the landing of a foreign force in Syria would be the signal for other catastrophes.

This had been said in the presence of Sir Henry Bulwer, who had received instructions to support the sending of a Mixed Commission into Syria, but none with regard to foreign intervention.

M. Lavalette concludes his despatch by asking, "Comment entend-on sauvegarder Constantinople?" adding, that the greatest agitation prevailed there.

M. Lavalette's despatch, as is often the case with telegrams, is somewhat obscure, as to the meaning of Ali Pasha's apprehensions of further catastrophes. M. Thouvenel considers that the words apply to Constantinople, and I am disposed to give them the same meaning.

M. Thouvenel observed that he could not admit the reasoning, that because a Turkish Minister was apprehensive that if a foreign force should be landed in Syria there would be disturbances at Constantinople, the Great Powers were on that account to desist from a measure that had appeared to them necessary for the future tranquillity of that country. If such reasoning were once to be admitted, it would be put forward on every occasion when an abuse was to be corrected in Turkey. I remarked that when the French Ambassador concluded his despatch by the question which I have quoted above, it seemed to me that he partook the apprehensions entertained by Ali Pasha of there being danger of a rising at Constantinople. Now, shocking as I admitted the late proceedings in Syria had been, I could not put them in the same scale with those that might follow a fanatic insurrection at Constantinople.

Would it not be better, I asked, to delay, or even to abandon, an armed intervention in Syria, if by pursuing that course still greater calamities at Constantinople might be the consequence. First let the peace of the capital be ensured, and it would then be seen how far it would be necessary to interfere in the provinces. M. Thouvenel, however, did not seem inclined to listen to this reasoning. He argued that it was the penury of the Porte which had placed the capital in danger, as was clear from the observations of Ali Pasha made before the Convention had been proposed to him.

With regard to an advance of fifty millions of francs, M. Thouvenel said that it would be impossible for the French Government to give the Porte any assistance.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

No. 21.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received July 23.)

(No. 941.)

My Lord,

Paris, July 22, 1860.

M. THOUVENEL informs me that although the Austrian Government does not object to the plan of an armed European intervention in Syria, yet that they are not inclined to furnish troops themselves.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

No. 22.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received July 23.)

(No. 944.)

My Lord,

Paris, July 22, 1860.

I HAVE the honor to inclose herewith to your Lordship, extracted from the "Moniteur" of this day, an article stating that the propositions made by the Imperial Government with a view of preventing further effusion of blood in Syria have been favorably received by the Great Powers.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

Inclosure in No. 22.

Extract from the "Moniteur" of July 22, 1860.

LES propositions que le Gouvernement de l'Empereur a faites dans le but d'arrêter l'effusion du sang en Syrie et de protéger les populations Chrétiennes ont été accueillies par les Grandes Puissances. L'Angleterre, prête à

coopérer avec ses vaisseaux, reconnaît l'opportunité de l'envoi d'un corps de troupes dont la France fournirait la totalité ou la plus grande part. L'Autriche et la Russie émettent la même opinion. Le Ministre des Affaires Etrangères de Prusse s'est rendu auprès de Son Altesse Royale le Prince Régent pour prendre ses ordres. Une Convention doit être signée pour déterminer le caractère et l'objet de l'intervention Européenne. On n'attend plus que l'acquiescement de la Porte.

No. 23.

Lord J. Russell to Earl Cowley.

(No. 720.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, July 23, 1860.

THE accounts which have been received from Syria during the last ten days have been of the most frightful character. Besides the numbers killed in actual conflict, 5,500 persons have been the victims of massacre, and 20,000, including the widows and children of the murdered, are wandering in a state of famine through the country.

While these dreadful scenes were going on, the Turks appear to have been inactive spectators, where they were not accomplices in the work of massacre.

At Deir-el-Kamar, Osman Pasha disarmed the Christian inhabitants, and, after eight days of privation, exposed them to be shot and cut to pieces by their ferocious enemies.

The conduct of the Turks, in other places, exposes them to the suspicions of favouring the wholesale murders of the Christians.

Indignant at this want of humanity and of energy, Her Majesty's Government have received, and accepted, a proposal of the Emperor of the French to send European troops to Syria to prevent further excesses.

I inclose a copy of the despatch from M. Thouvenel to the Count de Persigny upon this subject.*

To this despatch, I replied verbally to M. de Persigny, that Her Majesty's Government would not object to an expedition of European troops to Syria, to be regulated by a Convention between the Porte and the Five Powers.

M. Persigny yesterday put into my hands a project of the proposed Convention, of which I likewise inclose a copy.

It appears to Her Majesty's Government, that although the exceptional circumstances justify this expedition, yet, if the news of the next ten days or a fortnight should justify the hope that the massacres are stopped, and will not be renewed, the very hazardous attempt of endeavouring to tranquillize the country by foreign troops should not be resorted to. In that case the French troops should not embark, or should at once return.

It appears also to Her Majesty's Government that a final term should be inserted in the Convention for the evacuation of Syria by foreign troops. Six months might be the period fixed for the occupation.

If Syria is not tranquillized in that time, it will be clear that no period, however long, will suffice to reduce it to peace and order.

Another Article of the Convention requires some remark. In the present state of the finances of Turkey, there is no prospect of the repayment of the expenses of this expedition by the Porte; but an engagement to this effect will leave the Sultan under a very onerous obligation, and complicate still further the financial condition of Turkey. Her Majesty's Government are of opinion that this Article should be omitted.

I have spoken throughout this despatch of French troops only. Her Majesty has determined to send a squadron to the coast of Syria, with a power to be vested in the Admiral to land Marines, if necessary; but it is not the intention of Her Majesty to employ her land forces in the effort to prevent these massacres and restore order.

It is not probable that any other of the Great Powers will send troops to Syria.

It must be added, that the employment of foreign forces in the interior of Syria is a measure which is sanctioned by Her Majesty's Government with

great reluctance. It may provoke a fiercer fanaticism among the Mussulmans and may possibly retard, instead of hastening, the pacification of Syria. It is a measure which may lead to international difficulties of a grave character.

It is on these accounts desirable that the intervention should only be undertaken when the necessity is clearly proved, and that it should cease as soon as that necessity shall no longer exist.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 24.

Lord J. Russell to Earl Cowley.

(No. 725. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, July 23, 1860.

I HAVE to call your attention to a Protocol of the 17th of September, 1840, contained in the volume of "State Papers" of 1839-40, p. 348, and of which I inclose a copy.

I wish your Excellency to consider whether a Protocol in the same sense, declaring that the Powers seek no separate advantage by their intervention in the affairs of Turkey might not at the present time tend to reassure Europe as to the intentions of the Allied Powers.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 25.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received July 24.)

(No. 946.)

My Lord,

Paris, July 23, 1860.

I HAD a further conversation with M. Thouvenel this afternoon on the position of affairs in Syria. His Excellency had received despatches from M. de Persigny, stating the disinclination of Her Majesty's Government to agree any longer to the expedition of a French force to Syria, and their general disapprobation of the project of Convention to be signed between the Porte and the Great Powers in furtherance of this expedition, the outline of which I had the honour to give your Lordship in my despatch No. 927 of the 19th instant, and which M. de Persigny afterwards communicated to your Lordship *in extenso*. M. Thouvenel had been with the Emperor to impart to His Majesty the contents of the despatches which he had received from London, and he said that he could not conceal from me that they had given His Majesty great pain, as they proved too plainly the suspicions which Her Majesty's Government entertained of the dealings of France.

It is M. Thouvenel's intention to address an instruction in answer to M. de Persigny. It will I believe, be very much in the language which his Excellency held to me yesterday, and which I had the honour to report to your Lordship in my despatch No. 939, but his Excellency in the remarks which he made to me to-day, said that Her Majesty's Government should recollect that it was not until the attack had been made on Damascus, that he had proposed an armed expedition to Syria, and that even if peace had been made between the Druses and the Maronites, of which he was still ignorant, there was no certainty that the massacre of the Christians had not been consummated at Damascus, and extended to Orfa, Aleppo, and other places. France, his Excellency continued, would be perfectly justified in asking and enforcing reparation for the plunder of the French Consul's house at Damascus, and for the sack of the Latin Convents in the Lebanon, which had been since the time of St. Louis under the protection of France, but she had no wish to act single-handed in any question arising in the East, and had given a proof of it in the course which she had now taken.

M. Thouvenel said further that he should desire M. de Persigny to inquire what steps her Majesty's Government proposed should be adopted.

He could not conceive it possible that they should advocate a policy of abstention ("une politique d'abstention") in face of such grave events.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

No. 26.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received July 24.)

(No. 947.)

My Lord,

Paris, July 23, 1860.

THE Sardinian Minister has addressed a note to M. Thouvenel, claiming on the part of his Government the right to be consulted on the affairs of Syria, in virtue of the Treaty of Paris, to which Sardinia was a party.

M. Thouvenel has replied that he has addressed the Great Powers on this question in virtue of the arrangement respecting it made in 1845, and not in virtue of the Treaty of 1856, but that he has no objection whatever to the participation of Sardinia in any discussion that may now arise, provided that the other Powers have none, though he considers that her immiscion in this matter will only produce delay.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

No. 27.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received July 24.)

(No. 951.)

My Lord,

Paris, July 23, 1860.

A REPORT having reached me that several thousand Minié rifles had been distributed by French Agents among the Maronites, I mentioned this to M. Thouvenel this afternoon, remarking that when I made use of the words "French Agents," I by no means meant to imply Agents of the Government, for I knew very well that the Ultramontane Catholics were in constant communication with the Latin Church in the Lebanon, and might have furnished the arms of which I spoke.

M. Thouvenel, while denying at once and absolutely that any arms had been furnished by the Imperial Government to the Maronites, said, that it was well known that arms had been introduced in large quantities lately into Syria, that they were both of French and of British manufacture, and that they were sold openly in Beyrout, both to Druses and Maronites.

His Excellency added that he had more than once, while at Constantinople, spoken to Sir Henry Bulwer on this sign of a renewal of the old warfare between these inimical tribes.

Talking of the commencement of the late strife, M. Thouvenel said, that it was very likely that the Maronites had been instigated by certain of their priests to commence the fray, by asserting a sovereignty over the Mixed districts. It might be so, and he had no wish that the truth should be concealed, and that the authors of these terrible scenes should not be punished. But be this as it might, the indiscriminate slaughter of men, women, and children, went beyond the pale of legitimate defence, while the attack on Zahlé and Damascus, the Christian inhabitants of which were Greeks, and not Maronites, showed that it was not defence but slaughter which was intended. He had received, as far back as the month of March, intelligence that Achmet Pacha, the Governor of Damascus, had planned the entire destruction of the Christians at Zahlé and Deir-el-Kamar, but the plot seemed to him too hideous to be true, and no notice had been taken of the information. His Excellency then sent for and read me a despatch from the French Consul-General at Beyrout, dated the 28th March last, in which Count Bentivoglio mentions having been made acquainted with Achmet Pacha's plans. A copy of this despatch has been sent to M. de Persigny, for your Lordship's information. The contents of it are certainly curious, and I can have no doubt

of its authenticity, for I have seen the original. If the crime can be brought home to Achmet Pacha, there is no punishment of which he is not deserving.

The object of M. Thouvenel in referring to these matters was evidently to show that the presence of foreign troops in Syria is necessary, if justice is to be obtained at the hands of the Turks, whom he considers quite as bad or worse than the Druses.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

No. 28.

Lord J. Russell to Sir H. Bulwer.

(No. 357.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, July 24, 1860.

I INFORMED you by my telegram of the 19th instant, that a proposal had been made by the French Government that European troops should be sent to Syria; that this measure should be carried into effect in concert with the Great Powers and the Porte; and that Her Majesty's Government had assented to it.

I stated at the same time that the object of this expedition should be defined by a Convention, which should also provide for the retirement of the European troops so soon as that object had been attained.

I have now to acquaint you that the orders which had been given for the embarkation of French troops for Syria have been suspended in consequence of the intelligence that hostilities between the Druses and the Maronites had ceased.

The Sultan, however, should lose no time in consulting the Great Powers in regard to the terms of a Convention such as I have alluded to above, as steps must be taken for the complete pacification of Syria, and for effectually guarding against future massacres.

The French Ambassador has communicated to me a project of Convention, as amendments to which Her Majesty's Government have proposed that the period during which European troops should remain in Syria should be limited to six months, and that the expenses of the expedition should not be borne by the Sultan.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 29.

Lord Bloomfield to Lord J. Russell.—(Received July 25.)

(No. 261.)

My Lord,

Berlin, July 23, 1860.

WHEN I was with Baron Schleinitz this morning, his Excellency inquired if I had any intelligence from your Lordship respecting the French proposal to send a joint military expedition to Syria; and I replied that I was uninformed of the opinions of Her Majesty's Government upon the subject. His Excellency then told me, that he understood the proposal of the French Government had been generally approved of at Vienna and St. Petersburg, and that Count Bernstorff had confirmed the statement made by the French Minister at this Court of the acquiescence of Her Majesty's Government in the project, but that he appeared to be under the impression, with regard to the proposed Convention between the Five Powers and the Porte, that Her Majesty's Government would prefer that the negotiation of this act took place at Constantinople rather than at Paris, as had been proposed.

In the meantime I understand that Prince la Tour d'Auvergne has received a draft of the proposed Convention for communication to the Prussian Government.

I have, &c.
(Signed) BLOOMFIELD.

No. 30.

M. Thouvenel to Count Persigny.—(Communicated to Lord J. Russell by Count Persigny, July 25.)

M. le Comte,

Paris, le 23 Juil'et, 1860.

J'AI reçu le message télégraphique, ainsi que la dépêche que vous m'avez fait l'honneur de m'adresser en date d'hier.

Le Gouvernement de l'Empereur a appris, avec autant d'étonnement que de regret, que l'entente qui s'était établie entre le Cabinet Anglais et nous, sous l'empire des considérations les plus puissantes, semblait remise en question. Nous n'avons pas reçu la nouvelle de la conclusion de la paix entre les Druses et les Maronites qui aurait eu lieu le 10. La dépêche télégraphique du Commandant de notre station navale, datée de Beyrout le 11, n'en fait aucune mention et signale les massacres qui avaient commencé le 9 à Damas. Nous savons que de nombreux fugitifs avaient cherché un asile dans le Kesrouan, et il ne serait pas surprenant que cette population, démoralisée par les horribles scènes des jours précédents, menacée d'une nouvelle agression qui l'eût anéantie toute entière, eût consenti à traiter avec les Druses. Mais quelle serait la valeur morale d'une telle Convention? La conscience publique peut-elle admettre qu'un nouvel abus de la force consacre et légitime en quelque sorte les atrocités antérieurement commises et fasse disparaître les traces du sang versé?

Au reste, les événements du Liban ne sont pas les seuls qui aient agi sur nos résolutions. C'est le massacre de Damas qui nous a déterminé à appeler l'attention des Puissances sur la nécessité d'une action immédiate et énergique. A l'heure qu'il est, savons-nous si le carnage commencé le 9 n'a pas continué le lendemain? Avons-nous la certitude qu'il ne se sera pas étendu plus loin, et que le sang Chrétien ne coule pas à Alep, à Orfa, à Diarbekir, à Jérusalem, partout en un mot où les populations se trouvent en butte au fanatisme excité par ce qui vient de se passer à Damas comme dans le Liban? La paix fût-elle conclue dans la Montagne, la situation est restée la même, et combien n'avons-nous pas de raisons de craindre qu'elle ne se soit aggravée?

Nous ne saurions donc, M. le Comte, partager à cet égard la confiance du Gouvernement Anglais, et à nos yeux l'état des choses n'a point changé depuis la nouvelle non encore confirmée, ou suffisamment expliquée pour nous, dont Lord John Russell vous a entretenu.

Je tiens, au surplus, à bien établir le caractère des communications et des idées que nous avons échangées avec le Cabinet de Londres. En présence des informations reçues du Liban, il nous avait, le premier, conviés à envoyer des bâtiments de guerre sur les côtes de Syrie, et à donner aux Commandants des escadres l'ordre de débarquer leurs équipages. Les événements de Damas étant venu nous éclairer entièrement sur la portée de cette guerre atroce dont les Druses ont pris l'initiative, mais dans laquelle ils ont trouvé pour alliés les populations Mussulmanes, nous avons pensé qu'il y avait plus à faire, et nous avons suggéré la pensée d'une action collective, sans spécifier les rôles et sans prévoir que nous pussions y prendre une part plus grande que celles des autres Puissances. Cette action devait d'ailleurs être subordonnée à un accord préalable avec la Porte. A tous égards, il était impossible de mieux sauvegarder les principes.

Le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Britannique n'a point hésité à accepter notre proposition. Selon les expressions mêmes de Lord John Russell, rapportées dans votre dépêche du 18 de ce mois, l'Angleterre devait augmenter considérablement sa station sur les côtes de Syrie, afin d'être en mesure de protéger efficacement les populations du littoral. Quant à celles de l'intérieur, elles seraient protégées par des troupes Françaises, aidées peut-être de troupes Autrichiennes. En nous proposant cette combinaison, le Principal Secrétaire d'Etat nous invitait à préparer le projet de Convention destiné à régler l'action commune des Puissances et de la Porte. Lord Cowley, de son côté, était chargé de me faire les mêmes communications.

Cette entente particulière que, grâce à la proximité des deux pays, nous avons pu établir sans aucune perte de temps, nous permettait de compter

également sur le succès de nos démarches auprès des autres Cabinets. Nous avons donc rédigé le projet de Convention; Lord John Russell a bien voulu le trouver conforme à l'objet que l'Angleterre avait en vue comme nous. Du reste, nous avons eu soin de ne le présenter au Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Britannique que comme une simple indication des clauses essentielles qui pourraient servir de base aux délibérations ultérieures. L'Article VI pouvait être supprimé. Nous n'attachons, il est aisé d'en saisir les motifs, que peu d'importance à la disposition qu'il renferme; nous avons pensé seulement, comme vous l'avez fait remarquer avec beaucoup de raison à Lord John Russell, que cette disposition aurait pour effet de mieux ménager la dignité du Sultan, en faisant ressortir que les Puissances agiraient en qualité d'auxiliaires de la Porte. C'est ce que je n'ai pas manqué d'établir dans les communications identiques que j'ai faites aux autres Cours, comme vous pouvez le voir par la copie ci-jointe de la dépêche que j'ai adressée aux Représentants de Sa Majesté à Vienne, à Berlin, et à St. Pétersbourg.

D'après Lord Palmerston, M. le Comte, une telle Convention serait funeste au prestige et à l'indépendance du Sultan. Quelle est donc la situation à Constantinople? La dépêche ci-jointe de l'Ambassadeur de Sa Majesté vous permettra d'en apprécier toute la gravité et l'urgence. La déclaration si alarmante d'Aali Pacha est antérieure à la communication dont j'avais chargé M. le Marquis de Lavalette. Elle révèle un état de choses arrivées à la veille d'une crise, et d'une crise indépendante de ce qui se passe en Syrie. Elle est née de causes dont le développement nous préoccupait vivement déjà avant que les affaires du Liban vinssent fixer notre attention; elle peut éclater au premier jour par suite d'incidents tout-à-fait étrangers à l'état de la Syrie; et si quelque chose, au contraire, est de nature à conjurer de plus grandes difficultés, et à faciliter le secours sans lequel Aali Pacha juge que tout est perdu, n'est-ce pas un accord des Puissances pour exercer une action énergique dans le Liban, et mettre fin aux épouvantables désordres dont ces contrées sont le théâtre?

Et d'ailleurs, M. le Comte, la conscience de l'Europe peut-elle admettre l'impunité d'un odieux massacre dans l'espoir si incertain d'arrêter ailleurs les entraînements du fanatisme? Aux maux qu'elle déplore, à ceux qu'elle prévoit, la politique des Cabinets n'a-t-elle d'autres remèdes à apposer que l'abstention? Nous ne saurions le croire, et ce n'est pas l'indifférence que conseillerait en présence d'une situation semblable un Gouvernement aussi éclairé que le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Britannique dans toutes les questions d'humanité.

Nous n'avons, quant à nous, nul désir d'intervenir en Orient en dehors d'une action commune. Bien que le pillage de notre Consulat à Damas et le meurtre de missionnaires Français que notre drapeau n'a pas couverts, nous créent des griefs et des devoirs particuliers, nous n'avons eu tout d'abord qu'une seule pensée; celle de nous concerter avec les autres Puissances. Nous avons par là dégagé notre responsabilité. Néanmoins nous demandons encore au Cabinet Anglais de revenir à ses premières dispositions, et de co-opérer avec nous dans une mesure égale en Syrie. S'il ne croit pas pouvoir le faire, quelles sont ses intentions, et quelle initiative se propose-t-il de prendre? Nous sommes prêts à examiner ses idées, et à les adopter si elles sont plus pratiques que les nôtres et répondent mieux aux exigences de la situation; mais il comprendra, j'en ai la confiance, que nous obéissons à un devoir en lui demandant de nous communiquer ses vues.

Vous êtes autorisé à donner lecture et à remettre copie de cette dépêche à Lord John Russell.

Agréez, &c.
(Signé) THOUVENEL.

No. 31.

Lord Bloomfield to Lord J. Russell.—(Received July 26.)

(No. 264. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Berlin, July 24, 1860.

I HAVE just seen Baron Schleinitz, and heard from his Excellency that the Prince de la Tour d'Auvergne has communicated to him the draft of a

Convention, drawn up by the French Government for the consideration of the Five Powers and Turkey, to regulate the projected military intervention in the affairs of Syria, and of which the Prince has given Baron Schleinitz to understand Her Majesty's Government had already expressed their approval.

His Excellency said, with reference to this project, that Prussia was ready to admit that foreign interference might be necessary to restore order in Syria, and was therefore disposed to recognize in principle the propriety of such interference, but she must make her reserves respecting some of the Articles of the proposed Convention, and especially as to any active co-operation on the part of Prussia. He added, moreover, that the Porte did not seem, as far as he was informed, to have been sufficiently consulted on a question of such grave importance to her.

Baron Schleinitz then mentioned that, according to information which had reached him, Russia was not satisfied with the French project of Convention, but would, nevertheless, consent to it upon the understanding that France agreed to enter into an engagement with her that the principle of intervention admitted in the Syrian Convention should be applied to the Provinces of Turkey in Europe.

I have, &c.
(Signed) BLOOMFIELD.

No. 32.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received July 26.)

(No. 958.)

My Lord,

Paris, July 24, 1860.

ON the receipt this morning of your Lordship's despatch No. 720 of yesterday's date, stating what had passed between yourself and M. de Persigny, relative to the proposal made by the French Government, that European troops should be sent to Syria, and informing me, that while Her Majesty's Government gave their assent to this proposal with reluctance, they were of opinion that the expedition should not be carried into effect if the news received by your Lordship, that tranquillity had been restored, should prove correct, I waited upon M. Thouvenel, and communicated to him the general views of Her Majesty's Government.

M. Thouvenel was much relieved by this clear statement, for his Excellency had been led by M. de Persigny to believe that Her Majesty's Government had withdrawn, or were about to withdraw, their consent to the expedition. I showed M. Thouvenel that this was not the case, but that Her Majesty's Government advised great deliberation and caution in proceeding to so exceptional a measure.

I mentioned to his Excellency, that he must admit that the landing a foreign force in Syria would add to the complications already existing in that unfortunate country, and that, moreover, it might establish a precedent that might soon be taken advantage of by Russia, who could raise disturbances in the European Provinces of Turkey whenever it might suit her purposes.

Her Majesty's Government, I said, had shown their desire to meet the wishes of France, whenever the necessity of armed intervention in Syria should be clearly shown, and it was not too much to ask, in return, that in presence of the difficulties, and even of the danger of such intervention, it should not be lightly undertaken.

I did not obtain any positive answer from M. Thouvenel.

His Excellency had not then received the official answer of the Russian and Prussian Governments to the proposal of intervention, neither had any reply come from the Porte to the proposal for the signature of a Convention.

His Excellency seemed to wish that there should be a meeting between the Representatives of the Five Powers, and the Representative of the Porte, to discuss the terms of the Convention.

I observed that, although your Lordship had expressed certain opinions with regard to those terms, I had imagined that it was intended by the French Government that the Convention should be concluded at Constantinople.

His Excellency, however, said that he had proposed to the Powers, and to

the Porte, that it should be concluded at Paris. I should be glad to be furnished with your Lordship's instructions on this point.

With regard to the Convention, M. Thouvenel is quite ready to abandon the Article imposing the expense of the expedition on the Porte, which his Excellency states was only inserted with the intention of making it appear that the French Government were not conferring an obligation on the Porte, and I do not imagine, if negotiations go further, that M. Thouvenel will refuse to insert a clause in the Convention limiting the number of troops to be employed, and fixing the period of occupation.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

No. 33.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received July 26.)

(No. 962.)

My Lord,

Paris, July 25, 1860.

I RECEIVED late yesterday evening a note from M. Thouvenel, saying that he was in possession of disastrous news, dated the 23rd instant, from Constantinople, of the state of affairs at Damascus as late as the 12th instant.

At that moment 10,000 persons who had taken refuge in the quarter inhabited by Abd-el-Kader expected to be hourly attacked and massacred by the Mussulman population, excited by the Turkish Authorities themselves. M. Thouvenel added that he had sent a copy of M. de Lavalette's despatch to London, and that in presence of the facts which it related, he hoped that Her Majesty's Government would not ask for any further delay in the departure of troops to Syria.

His Excellency went on to say that he intended to convoke a meeting of Representatives of the Five Powers and of the Porte for this day in order to examine the project of Convention; that the Representatives of Austria, Russia, and Prussia were fully authorized to assist at it; that he hoped that I was in the same position; and that M. de Lavalette's despatch gave him the right to suppose that the Turkish Ambassador would receive instructions in the course of the night.

I replied to M. Thouvenel that I had no authority from your Lordship to attend any meeting for the purpose of considering the terms of the Convention; but that I had asked for instructions by telegraph. If I should receive no answer from your Lordship before the hour for which the meeting was convened should arrive, I would take upon myself to attend, but simply for the purpose of listening to what his Excellency had to propose. In a subsequent communication, I qualified my first letter so far as to say that it was to be understood that, pending instructions from your Lordship, I could not attend a conference on Turkish affairs unless the Representative of the Porte should be present. I hope that your Lordship will approve the course I have taken.

I consider that I should compromise nothing by attending, while a refusal, in presence of the consent of my colleagues to attend, might be attributed to unfriendly motives.

M. Thouvenel had fixed to see me this afternoon on other matters, and when I went to his office I found that he had suspended the intention of summoning the meeting which he had announced to me, until I could inform him of the decision of Her Majesty's Government. He said that the object of the meeting would be to sign the Convention respecting the foreign troops, and that it was not intended to touch upon any other question.

His Excellency then proceeded to read to me the telegrams which he had received from M. de Lavalette. The upshot of them is that Achmet Effendi, the Turkish Ambassador, will be authorized to attend a Conference; that he will be instructed to protest in the first instance against the employment of foreign troops in Syria; but to admit of it if he shall find that it is the general wish of the Five Powers that he should do so.

In that case he is to insist on two conditions:—

1. That the foreign troops shall disembark and be encamped at Beyrouth and in the neighbourhood, and nowhere else.

2. That they shall undertake no movement but at the requisition of Fuad Pacha.

M. Thouvenel observed that to neither of these conditions could the Imperial Government consent.

With regard to the first, if accepted, it would render the intervention illusory, besides which the neighbourhood of Beyrouth was most unhealthy.

With respect to the second, it was totally impossible for the Commander of the French forces to make his movements, on which the success of all his operations might turn, dependent on the caprice of any Turkish authority. The safety of his troops might be thereby compromised.

I fear that under present circumstances, it will be difficult to dissuade the French Government from sending troops.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

No. 34.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received July 26.)

(No. 963.)

My Lord,

Paris, July 25, 1860.

M. THOUVENEL read me this afternoon the replies which he had received from Vienna and Berlin to his proposal of sending troops to Syria. They are both affirmative of the project, and, I am sorry to say, so laudative of the French Government for having taken the initiative in this matter, that the latter are thereby encouraged in their project of armed intervention.

The Prussian Government wish that Article IV of the Convention, respecting the employment of the naval forces of the Great Powers to assist in the pacification of Syria should be made facultative and not obligatory, but M. Thouvenel will not consent to this modification, as he desires to be assured, for the safety of the French troops, of the co-operation of the other Powers if necessary.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

No. 35.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received July 26.)

(No. 964. Confidential)

My Lord,

Paris, July 25, 1860.

I WAS informed yesterday afternoon confidentially that the Russian Ambassador had been instructed not to agree to the Convention for sending troops to Syria, unless a Secret Article were added to it, obliging the Powers to consent to a similar armed intervention in the European Provinces of Turkey, should it become necessary, and that the Austrian Government had consented to the addition of this Article, provided it met with the assent of the Porte and the other Powers.

I asked M. Thouvenel this afternoon whether any proposal of the kind had been made to him. His Excellency replied in the affirmative, but said that he had at once rejected it, and pressed the Russian Ambassador not to persist in asking for it. He had urged that the object of the proposed Convention was specific and not general, and that its conclusion would be risked by such an addition as Russia proposed.

Count Kisseleff consented on this remonstrance to withdraw his proposal.

I told M. Thouvenel that I felt convinced that Her Majesty's Government would never have authorized the signature of a Convention containing such a stipulation.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received July 26.)

(No. 965.)

My Lord,

Paris, July 25, 1860.

I INQUIRED this afternoon of M. Thouvenel what was the amount of force the Emperor proposed sending to Syria. His Excellency replied, 6,800 men. They were to be commanded, his Excellency said, by General Beaufort, an officer who knew every inch of the country, as he had been attached to the Head-Quarters of Ibrahim Pasha, when the latter occupied Syria.

It seems that both the Emperor and his General think this force more than sufficient to strike a blow at Damascus, which seems to be their object. M. Thouvenel told me that the Emperor was of opinion that a heavy chastisement should be inflicted on that town, and that the expedition should then come away. Two months His Majesty thought would suffice for this, and on the departure of the troops the Commission might come into play, the ground having been thus well prepared for them.

I said that I feared that long before French troops could arrive at Damascus the leaders in the late horrible massacres would have taken care of themselves and would be beyond the reach of punishment. M. Thouvenel said that this might be so, but that the town of Damascus, which was very rich, might be heavily fined. There will be time for reflection, but it seems to me that little will be effected, if the authors of these dreadful massacres shall escape punishment. The Turkish troops now in Syria should at all events be employed to follow them into the interior of the country if necessary.

I have, &c.

(Signed) COWLEY.

No. 37.

Count Rechberg to Count Apponyi.—(Communicated to Lord J. Russell by Count Apponyi, July 27.)

M. le Comte,

Vienne, le 22 Juillet, 1860.

J'AI l'honneur de vous transmettre ci-près en copie deux dépêches que j'ai adressées au Prince de Metternich en réponse aux ouvertures que M. Thouvenel nous a adressées en même tems qu'aux autres Grandes Puissances sur les mesures à prendre dans l'intérêt de la pacification de la Syrie.

Lord A. Loftus m'ayant informé de l'adhésion de son Gouvernement aux propositions Françaises, j'espère que Lord J. Russell, auquel vous voudrez bien donner lecture des annexes, sera d'accord avec leur contenu.

Recevez, &c.

(Signé) RECHBERG.

Inclosure 1 in No. 37.

M. Thouvenel to the Marquis de Moustier.

Paris, le 16 Juillet, 1860.

LES événements qui viennent de se passer dans le Liban ont, comme nous devions nous y attendre, profondément ému l'opinion, et tous les Cabinets ont compris qu'ils leur créaient des devoirs. Tous se sont empressés de fournir à leurs Agents sur les lieux les moyens en leur pouvoir pour protéger les populations Chrétiennes, et il est à espérer que ces moyens combinés, avec l'envoi des troupes Ottomanes mises à la disposition de Fuad Pacha, suffiront pour arrêter au moins l'effusion du sang. Mais, après de pareils scènes et une semblable perturbation dans tous les rapports, il ne suffit pas, pour satisfaire aux principes de justice et d'ordre et pour rétablir un état de choses durable, de comprimer l'insurrection et d'obliger les Druses à déposer les armes. La

situation exige des mesures propres à la fois à réparer d'effroyables calamités et à en prévenir le retour.

Dans cette seconde partie de leur tâche, les Puissances, M. le Marquis, me paraissent avoir un rôle tracé d'avance par les antécédents de la question. Les contestations entre les Maronites et les Druses, bien qu'elles n'aient point encore peut-être présenté un tel caractère d'acharnement et pris des proportions aussi fâcheuses, ont déjà à diverses époques occupé les Cabinets; et l'arrangement de 1845, destiné à régler le régime administratif dans le Liban, est le résultat d'un accord conclu entre eux et la Porte. Cet arrangement se trouve aujourd'hui méconnu par les Druses; et les Puissances qui en avaient arrêté les conditions et les termes avec le Gouvernement Ottoman sont, par cela même, naturellement appelées à examiner de concert avec lui les causes auxquelles il convient d'en attribuer la violation ainsi que les dispositions qu'il peut y avoir lieu d'y substituer. La Porte n'a jamais fait difficulté d'admettre les bons offices de la diplomatie dans les conflits qui ont successivement éclaté entre les populations du Liban, et l'accord que nous jugeons indispensable ne constituerait nullement une innovation ou une acte d'intervention dont on aurait à redouter l'effet pour la considération ou l'indépendance de la Turquie. Il serait conforme aux précédents et l'on n'y pourrait voir qu'une conséquence logique d'une entente antérieure à laquelle la Porte elle-même a prêté les mains, et qu'elle doit désirer de maintenir, parcequ'elle y trouvera un moyen de donner à de nouveaux arrangements toute l'autorité nécessaire.

Pour se former une idée exacte des faits accomplis et des nécessités de la situation, la voie à suivre me semble indiquée par la nature des choses. Les Puissances ne seraient pas suffisamment éclairées sur les difficultés et les besoins dont il faut tenir compte, si l'on ne procédait par voie d'examen sur les lieux et d'enquête collective. Le Gouvernement de l'Empereur jugerait donc utile l'institution d'une Commission formée de Délégués des Puissances et de la Porte. Cette Commission serait envoyée dans le Liban pour rechercher les circonstances qui ont provoqué les derniers conflits, déterminer la part de responsabilité des chefs de l'insurrection et des agents de l'administration locale, ainsi que les réparations dues aux victimes, et enfin étudier, pour les soumettre à l'approbation de leurs Gouvernements et de la Porte, les dispositions qui pourraient être adoptées en vue de conjurer de nouveaux malheurs.

Si, comme l'accord qui s'est établi spontanément dans les appréciations de toutes les Cours à la nouvelle des massacres du Liban me donne lieu de l'espérer, elles approuvaient cette idée, elles auraient entre les mains tous les éléments nécessaires pour concerter avec la Porte un arrangement qui, résultant d'un examen approfondi et réunissant une adhésion unanime, offrirait toutes les chances possibles de durée.

C'est donc avec confiance, M. le Marquis, que je vous invite à faire part de cette proposition à M. le Comte de Rechberg; j'adresse la même communication aux Cours de Londres, Berlin, et de St. Pétersbourg. De tous temps la sollicitude de la France s'est exercée dans le Liban. C'est une tradition que le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté ne saurait répudier. Elle nous imposait le devoir d'accomplir cette démarche auprès des Puissances. Toutefois, en prenant l'initiative dans les circonstances présentes nous ne sommes dirigés par aucune vue particulière, ni par le désir préconçu de poursuivre en faveur de l'une des deux populations entre lesquelles le conflit s'est élevé aucun avantage exclusif. Nous ne nous proposons d'autre objet que de concourir avec les Puissances, et au même titre, dans l'intérêt de la paix de l'Orient, à rétablir le calme et l'ordre sur un point où ils ne peuvent être troublés sans la mettre sérieusement en danger.

Vous voudrez bien donner lecture de cette dépêche à M. le Comte de Rechberg, et lui en remettre copie.

Agréez, &c.

(Signé) THOUVENEL.

Inclosure 2 in No. 37.

*M. Thouvenel to the Marquis de Moustier.**Paris, le 18 Juillet, 1860.*

PAR la dépêche que j'ai eu l'honneur de vous adresser en date du 18 de ce mois, je vous ai invité à faire part à M. le Comte de Rechberg de la proposition d'une entente collective des Puissances concernant les affaires du Liban. Depuis lors, de nouvelles et plus en plus affligeantes nous sont parvenues de la Syrie. Comme nous le redoutions, Damas a été à son tour le théâtre d'effroyables scènes de carnage, et il devient difficile de prévoir l'étendue que prendra cette guerre acharnée fait aux Chrétiens si les Cabinets ne se hâtaient d'adopter, autant qu'il dépend d'eux, toutes les mesures propres à en arrêter les progrès. Le Porte semble avoir elle-même un juste sentiment de cette situation. J'en trouve la preuve dans une lettre ci-jointe en copie que le Sultan adresse à l'Empereur et que ce Souverain a fait communiquer à M. le Marquis de Lavalette pour être transmis à Sa Majesté par télégraphe.

Toutefois il n'est pas moins nécessaire d'agir avec autant de promptitude que d'énergie, et comme il y a malheureusement lieu de craindre que les moyens d'action de la Porte ne répondent pas à ses intentions, je doute qu'elle pût satisfaire aux nécessités d'une situation si grave si les Puissances ne s'entendaient pour lui venir en aide.

L'ordre donné aux Commandants des escadres de mettre leurs équipages à la disposition des Consuls ne peut pas permettre d'atteindre l'insurrection dans son foyer au sein de Liban ni surtout dans les villes de l'intérieur qu'elle a déjà envahies ou qu'elle menace. Un corps de troupes mis à portée d'agir selon les circonstances serait seul en mesure de suffire à cet tâche. A tous ces points de vue il pourrait exercer une heureuse influence, non seulement à raison du concours éventuel qu'il porterait aux troupes Turques, mais par l'autorité morale que sa seule présence, en rassurant les populations, ne manquerait pas d'avoir sur l'attitude et la conduite des fonctionnaires Ottomans eux-mêmes.

Cette combinaison d'ailleurs ne pourrait recevoir son exécution que de concert avec la Porte, et il serait en outre essentiel qu'elle fût le résultat d'un accord évident des Cinq Cours.

L'intervention serait ainsi collective dans son principe, et les troupes Européennes envoyées dans des vues communes ne feraient en quelque sorte que remplir une délégation des Puissances. Si le Gouvernement Autrichien entraînait dans cet ordre d'idées, il serait sans doute possible d'établir sans retard une entente avec les autres Cabinets de la Porte, et d'aviser aux moyens les plus prompts d'obtenir les satisfactions dues à l'humanité, et de concourir au rétablissement de la paix en Syrie.

Ce résultat, M. le Marquis, serait important non pas seulement pour la conscience publique et pour les Chrétiens, mais aussi pour la Porte qui, dans l'état de crise où se trouvent son administration et ses finances, ne supporterait pas longtemps sans péril l'épreuve d'une insurrection aussi étendue à comprimer. C'est une considération qui n'échappera pas à la prévoyance du Cabinet de Vienne. Quant à nous, nous pensons qu'une combinaison de la nature de celle sur laquelle je viens de vous exprimer notre manière de voir, peut être adoptée avec avantage. Je ne m'en dissimule pas les inconvénients, mais l'abstention en aurait assurément de beaucoup plus grands en présence des complications qui menacent de surgir. Je vous prie de faire part à M. le Comte de Rechberg de l'opinion du Gouvernement de Sa Majesté et d'en conférer avec lui. En raison de l'urgence qui n'est que trop attestée par les événements, je vous serai obligé de me faire savoir, le plus tôt possible, ce que le Cabinet de Vienne pense à ce sujet, et quelles sont ses intentions.

Agréé, &c.
(Signé) THOUVENEL.

P.S.—Vous savez que j'avais transmis au Gouvernement Anglais ma communication en date du 16 de ce mois. Je reçois à l'instant une dépêche de M. le Comte de Persigny, par laquelle il m'annonce que le Cabinet Anglais adhère à notre proposition, et qu'il est prêt à se faire représenter dans une Commission, qui se rendrait la Syrie pour y remplir la tâche dont j'avais

indiqué l'objet. Lord J. Russell dans son entretien avec notre Ambassadeur s'est montré fort ému du caractère des tristes événements dont la Syrie est le théâtre, et de l'attitude qu'on est fondé à reprocher aux Agents de la Porte.

Inclosure 3 in No. 57.

*The Sultan to the Emperor of the French.**Palais de Dolma-Badji, 18 Juillet.*

JE tiens à ce que votre Majesté sache bien avec quelle douleur j'ai appris les événements de Syrie. Qu'elle soit convaincue que j'emploierai toutes mes forces pour rétablir l'ordre et la sécurité, punir sévèrement les coupables, quels qu'ils soient, et rendre justice à tous. Pour qu'il ne puisse y avoir aucun doute sur les intentions de mon Gouvernement, c'est à mon Ministre des Affaires Etrangères, dont les principes sont connus de votre Majesté, que j'ai voulu confier cette importante mission."

Inclosure 4 in No. 37.

*Count Rechberg to Prince Metternich.**Vienne, le 22 Juillet, 1860.*

LE Marquis de Moustier m'a successivement communiqué les deux dépêches de M. Thouvenel dont j'ai l'honneur de vous transmettre ci-près copie.

Ces pièces ont pour objet les maux qui pèsent sur les malheureuses populations Chrétiennes de la Syrie.

Dans le but d'y mettre promptement un terme, M. Thouvenel propose :

1. D'envoyer sur les lieux une Commission composée des Délégués des Cinq Grandes Puissances et de ceux de la Porte.

Cette Commission aurait à procéder à une enquête sur les derniers événements, et à suggérer des réformes à introduire dans les arrangements de 1845.

2. De confier à un corps de troupes Européennes par suite d'une Convention entre les Puissances et la Porte le soin de protéger les Chrétiens et de participer au rétablissement de l'ordre en Syrie.

J'ai eu l'honneur de prévenir votre Altesse par mon télégramme du 21 du courant, que nous adhérons pour notre part à ces propositions, pourvu toutefois que la Porte y donnât également son plein assentiment, et que la nécessité de la participation de troupes Européennes au rétablissement de l'ordre fût dûment constatée.

Si déplorables et si affligeantes pour l'humanité que soient les scènes horribles dont le Mont Liban et la Syrie ont été le théâtre, ce n'est que justice de reconnaître que le Gouvernement Ottoman à Constantinople, à peine informé de ces calamités, a montré la meilleure volonté et déployé à la fois beaucoup d'énergie pour réprimer le désordre.

Il nous semble donc avant tout indispensable d'attendre les premiers effets de la mission confiée à Fuad Pacha. Si contre toute attente le fanatisme Mussulman dont l'explosion subite a déjà fait tant de victimes, prenait de plus vastes proportions, et que les forces du Gouvernement Ottoman fussent évidemment impuissantes à en triompher, en ce cas nous reconnaissons que l'intervention Européenne serait complètement justifiée, et nous ne doutons point que le Sultan ne fût alors le premier à se ranger de cet avis.

Cela posé, votre Altesse peut dès aujourd'hui se considérer comme autorisée à prendre part sur la base des principes énoncés ci-dessus à une réunion éventuelle des Représentants des Cinq Puissances et de la Porte à Paris, ayant pour mission de régler par une acte diplomatique le but et les limites de cette intervention Européenne.

La France s'est déjà déclarée prête à se charger, à titre de délégation de l'Europe, de l'expédition d'un corps de troupes en Syrie pour co-opérer à la pacification du pays. Nous avons pour notre compte envoyé dans ces parages

une frégate de la marine Impériale et nous sommes disposés à y augmenter nos forces navales.

J'invite votre Altesse à s'expliquer dans ce sens envers M. Thouvenel en lui donnant communication de la présente dépêche.

Recevez, &c.
(Signé) RECHBERG.

Inclosure 5 in No. 37.

Count Rechberg to Prince Metternich.

Vienne, le 22 Juillet, 1860.

M. L'AMBASSADEUR de France nous a itérativement exprimé le prix que son Gouvernement attacherait à voir l'Autriche fournir son contingent au corps de troupes Européennes qu'il s'agit d'expédier en Syrie. Tout en appréciant les motifs qui ont inspiré ce désir au Cabinet des Tuileries nous verrions plus d'une difficulté à y déférer en ce moment.

La France possède dans ses troupes Algériennes aguerries au ciel brûlant de l'Afrique une précieuse ressource qui nous fait défaut. Une expédition dans des contrées lointaines d'un climat si différent du nôtre exigerait quant à l'habillement et à l'équipage des soldats des préparatifs qui demanderaient un certain temps. Il en serait de même pour les moyens de transport par mer. D'ailleurs nous ne dissimulons point que les projets agressifs et directement hostiles à l'Autriche que proclament avec une rare impudence les filibustiers qui se sont emparés de la Sicile, et qui ont pour arrière-garde l'armée Piémontaise, nous imposent le devoir de nous tenir sur nos gardes et de ne pas éparpiller sans nécessité urgente nos forces de terre disponibles.

M. Thouvenel, j'en suis persuadé d'avance, appréciera ces motifs, que je prie votre Altesse de vouloir bien lui développer.

Recevez, &c.
(Signé) RECHBERG.

No. 38.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received July 27.)

(No. 961 A.)

My Lord,

Paris, July 24, 1860.

IT struck me while conversing with M. Thouvenel this afternoon that the French Government might be more easily disposed to abandon the idea of sending troops to Syria, if the European Commission, which it was first proposed to send, was made of more importance by the nomination of Commissioners who should be dispatched from London and Paris. I hinted this to M. Thouvenel, and he seemed to like the idea.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

No. 39.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received July 27.)

(No. 979.)

My Lord,

Paris, July 26, 1860.

ON the receipt yesterday of your Lordship's telegram dated P.M. I informed M. Thouvenel that I was authorized to attend the meeting of the Representatives of the Five Powers and of the Porte with a view of discussing the conditions of the Convention which the Imperial Government was desirous of concluding between the said Powers and the Sultan, having for its object the occupation of Syria by an European force.

M. Thouvenel in consequence convoked a meeting of the above-mentioned Representatives for 3 o'clock this day.

His Excellency after briefly alluding to late events in Syria said, that he had requested the Representatives of the Great Powers and of the Porte to meet him in Conference, in order that he might communicate to them the project of a Convention which he was desirous should be concluded between the said Powers and the Porte, and which would permit of the employment of European troops to aid in restoring tranquillity in Syria. He believed that all the Representatives present, including the Turkish Ambassador, had been authorized to take part in this Conference. He begged to state further, that the document which he submitted for our consideration was only to be considered in the light of a project, that he had himself introduced modifications into it since it was first drawn up, and that he was quite ready to listen to any amendments or alterations which might be proposed by others.

The Turkish Ambassador said, that although he should make no objection to the Convention being read, yet that it was impossible for him to enter upon any discussion of the question of foreign intervention in Syria—

1st. Because he had no instructions from his Government upon the subject; and,

2ndly. Because, even if he had been in possession of those instructions, he could not discuss a Convention of such importance without previous examination and a full consideration of all its stipulations.

His Excellency further observed, that he did not understand on what ground it was proposed to send foreign troops to Syria, there being already a sufficient force from the Sultan's army to restore and maintain tranquillity in that country.

A desultory conversation ensued which, as might be expected, led to no result, and I then proposed that the French Representative should furnish each of us with a copy of the amended project of Convention, and as we must ourselves have time to consider the amendments, that we should adjourn until the Turkish Ambassador should be in possession of his instructions. This course was assented to, it appearing that my colleagues of Austria, Prussia, and Russia were also without instructions, although they were hourly expecting them.

M. Thouvenel stated that the French Ambassador at Constantinople had informed him that instructions to the Turkish Ambassador were to have been sent by telegraph last night. Under these circumstances the Conference, it is expected, will meet again on Saturday.

I have the honour to inclose a copy of the project of Convention as now amended, by the side of the original text, so that your Lordship will at once see where alterations have been introduced.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

Inclosure in No. 39.

Project of Convention respecting the Employment of European Troops in Syria.

Original Draft of Convention.

SA Majesté Impériale le Sultan voulant arrêter par des mesures promptes et efficaces l'effusion du sang en Syrie, et témoigner de sa ferme résolution d'assurer l'ordre et la paix parmi les populations placées sous sa souveraineté, et leurs Majestés l'Empereur d'Autriche, l'Empereur des Français, la Reine du Royaume Uni de la Grande Bretagne et d'Irlande, le Roi de Prusse, et l'Empereur de toutes les Russies, désirant lui prêter leur concours, ont décidé de se concerter pour aviser aux moyens propres à réaliser leurs intentions.

Original Draft of Convention.

A cet effet, leurs Majestés ont nommé pour leurs Plénipotentiaires, savoir:

Lesquels, &c.

ARTICLE I.

Un corps de troupes Européennes composé de hommes environ sera immédiatement dirigé en Syrie pour contribuer au rétablissement de la tranquillité.

ARTICLE II.

Sa Majesté Impériale l'Empereur des Français consent à fournir les troupes dont la participation est stipulée par l'Article précédent.

ARTICLE III.

Le Commandant-en-chef de ces troupes prendra, avec toutes les mesures exigées par les circonstances, les positions qu'il jugera convenable d'occuper pour remplir l'objet de sa mission. Il sera autorisé à s'entendre avec l'autorité militaire Ottomane pour déterminer la distribution et l'emploi des troupes que la Porte aura réunies en Syrie.

ARTICLE IV.

Leurs Majestés l'Empereur d'Autriche, la Reine du Royaume Uni de la Grande Bretagne et d'Irlande, le Roi de Prusse, et l'Empereur de toutes les Russies, promettent de concourir au succès des efforts communs en entretenant, sur les côtes de Syrie, les forces navales que les événements rendraient nécessaires, et d'y participer au besoin, par l'envoi de troupes de débarquement.

ARTICLE V.

Les Hautes Parties Contractantes se réservent de combiner d'un commun

Amended Draft of Convention.

ARTICLE I.

The same, with the word "immédiatement" suppressed.

ARTICLE II.

Sa Majesté l'Empereur des Français consent à fournir immédiatement la moitié de ce corps de troupes, et s'il devenait nécessaire de porter son effectif au chiffre stipulé dans l'Article précédent. Les Hautes Parties Contractantes s'entendront sans retard, par la voie diplomatique ordinaire, sur la désignation de celles des Puissances qui auraient à y pourvoir.

ARTICLE III.

Le Commandant-en-chef de l'expédition restera à son arrivée en communication avec le Commissaire Extraordinaire de la Porte, afin de prendre, avec toutes les mesures exigées par les circonstances, les positions qu'il jugera convenable d'occuper pour remplir l'objet de sa mission. Ils se concerteront également sur la distribution et l'emploi des troupes Ottomanes réunies en Syrie.

ARTICLE IV.

Leurs Majestés, &c., promettent d'entretenir sur les côtes de Syrie des forces navales suffisantes pour concourir au succès des efforts communs pour le maintien ou le rétablissement de la tranquillité sur le littoral de la Syrie.

ARTICLE V.

The same.

accord les dispositions ultérieures qu'il pourrait y avoir lieu d'adopter. Elles s'entendront également entre elles, dès

Original Draft of Convention.

que le but qu'elles ont en vue sera atteint, pour fixer le moment où les troupes Européennes devront être rappelées.

ARTICLE VI.

Les frais de transport et d'entretien des troupes débarqués en Syrie seront supportés par la Sublime Porte, qui s'engage en outre à faciliter par tous les moyens en son pouvoir leur subsistance et leur approvisionnement.

Amended Draft of Convention.

ARTICLE VI.

La Sublime Porte s'engage à faciliter par tous les moyens en son pouvoir la subsistance et l'approvisionnement du corps expéditionnaire.

No. 40.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received July 27.)

(No. 980. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Paris, July 26, 1860.

THE Russian Ambassador has again returned to the charge, and has induced M. Thouvenel to put forward a general declaration to be inserted in a Protocol, relative to the protection of Christians in Turkey by the Powers of Europe. M. Thouvenel showed me the project of declaration, of which I have the honour to inclose a copy, and asked if I could agree to it, observing that there was nothing in it which the Porte had not already promised to do. After perusing it, I said that I could not take upon myself to agree to any such declaration; that I had been authorized to discuss a special, and not a general question; but that I would refer the matter to your Lordship.

I have, &c.

(Signed) COWLEY.

Inclosure in No. 40.

Project of Declaration.

LES Puissances s'engagent à veiller à ce que d'accord avec la Porte et conformément à ses promesses, la situation des Chrétiens de l'Empire Ottoman en tous lieux et de tout rite soit réellement améliorée, et qu'il soit remédié par des mesures administratives sérieuses au retour des abus qui ont amené l'état de choses actuel.

No. 41.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received July 27.)

(No. 981. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Paris, July 26, 1860.

I SPOKE confidentially yesterday to M. Thouvenel upon the propriety, with reference to the possibility of European interference in Syria, of the signature by the Great Powers of a Protocol analogous in sense to that signed on the 17th September, 1840, to which your Lordship's confidential despatch No. 725 of the 23rd instant relates. M. Thouvenel at once adopted the idea, and he gave me this afternoon a project of Protocol, of which I have the honour to inclose a copy for your Lordship's consideration. He said, however, that I must consider the communication as confidential, as he had not yet been

able to take the Emperor's idea upon it. Your Lordship will find that M. Thouvenel has likewise consigned to this project of Protocol the declaration wished for by your Lordship, that the

occupation of Syria by foreign troops should cease after the lapse of six months. I confess that necessary as I think it is that this engagement should be entered into, I am of opinion that it should be kept secret even from the Porte. My experience of Turkish proceedings leads me to apprehend that if it is known by the Porte, that the occupation will cease within a given period, justice will be procrastinated in the hope of escaping its application altogether with the departure of the troops, while the Turkish Authorities in Syria, and the native inhabitants, will keep out of the way until they can show themselves again with safety.

It appears to me, further, that it will in any case be advisable not to refer to the possibility of a prolonged occupation, as M. Thouvenel has done. "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." It will be time enough to consider of prolonging the occupation when the necessity of doing so shall be proved.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

Inclosure in No. 41.

Project of Protocol.

LES Plénipotentiaires de désirant établir, conformément aux intentions de leurs Cours respectives, le véritable caractère du concours prêté à Sublime Porte aux termes de la Convention conclue en ce jour (ou le), les sentiments qui leur ont dicté les clauses de cet acte et leur entier désintéressement, déclarent de la manière la plus formelle que les Puissances Contractantes n'entendent poursuivre ni ne poursuivront dans l'exécution de leurs engagements aucun avantage territorial, aucune influence exclusive, ni aucune concession touchant le commerce de leurs sujets et qui ne pourrait être accordée aux sujets de toutes les autres nations.

Ils déclarent en outre que si, contre toute attente, le but que les Puissances ont en vue n'était pas atteint dans le délai de six mois, une occupation prolongée ne pourrait avoir lieu qu'en vertu d'un nouvel accord.

No. 42.

Sir H. Bulwer to Lord J. Russell.—(Received July 28.)

(No. 411. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Therapia, July 17, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copy of a telegram which His Imperial Majesty the Sultan addressed yesterday to Her Majesty the Queen, expressing his deep sorrow at the deplorable state of affairs in Syria, and announcing the measures His Imperial Majesty had taken to restore order and punish the guilty.

His Majesty's autograph signature is affixed to the inclosed transcript.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. L. BULWER.

Inclosure in No. 42.

The Sultan to Her Majesty the Queen.

(Traduction.)

(Télégraphique.)

Palais de Dolma-Badjé, le 16 Juillet, 1860.

JE tiens à ce que votre Majesté sache bien avec quelle douleur j'ai appris les événements de Syrie. Qu'elle soit convaincue que j'emploierai toutes mes forces pour y rétablir l'ordre et la sécurité, punir sévèrement les coupables quels qu'ils soient, et rendre justice à tous. Pour qu'il ne puisse y avoir aucun doute sur les intentions de mon Gouvernement, c'est à mon Ministre des Affaires Etrangères, dont les principes sont connus du Gouvernement de votre Majesté, que j'ai voulu confier cette importante mission.

No. 43.

Sir H. Bulwer to Lord J. Russell.—(Received July 28.)

(No. 418)

My Lord,

Therapia, July 17, 1860.

BEFORE this reaches you, your Lordship will be aware of the extent of the calamities which have occurred in Syria, and which I will not undertake to say we yet know clearly.

A despatch from Damascus of the 20th from Mr. Brant records his conviction that no Mussulman movement would take place in that city; a further despatch on the 26th stated his belief that the Druses of the Hauran would retire to their houses quietly; but he then spoke of the city as disturbed and agitated, and of the Christians being exposed to indignities not of late years imposed on them. A despatch which I saw to-day, being with Aali Pasha when it arrived, dated from Damascus on the 4th instant, written by the Governor, stated that the town was much quieter than it had been, and that nothing serious seemed likely to be apprehended.

In the meantime, however, a telegraphic despatch dated the 7th instant has reached the Russian Legation stating that the Christian quarter was assailed, and that the Russian and French Consuls had retired to the camp of Abd-el-Kader; whilst a communication dated the 9th, and brought by a French steamer from Beyrout, speaks of massacres, of the destruction of the houses of every Consul except the British, and of the total annihilation of the Turkish authority within the city. A telegram from Her Majesty's Consul at Smyrna repeats the same information.

There can be little doubt that something of the kind reported has taken place, but the details and the extent of the mischief it has caused have, I think, as yet to be ascertained.

The Sultan and the Turkish Government are struck down by this blow, which they did not anticipate, and of which they fully foresee the moral consequences.

His Imperial Majesty has written a letter to Her Majesty and to the Emperor of the French expressive of his sentiments, and the Seraskier has assured me that more troops shall be immediately dispatched.

In the meantime steam communication has been instituted by the means of small steamers stationed at the principal islands between this and Beyrout. What can be done here in short is done, or will be done; but as usual it comes too late.

Two considerations are now before us, namely, what has produced the recent events, and what is to be done to remedy them. With regard to the first, many persons have in my opinion been guilty; first, the Turks, who did not, and would not, pay sufficient attention to the representations made to them as to the position in which Syria was placed; and, secondly, those who have contributed in one way or another to bring things in Syria to their present pass.

One view, perhaps, an extreme view to take on this subject, and which I in no wise mean to enforce, though it is my duty to present it to your Lordship, is that which attributes to the intrigues of the Viceroy of Egypt, to similar intrigues on the part of the Maronites and French functionaries, and to like intrigues also on the part of the Russian Government, all the misfortunes that have occurred.

Persons who take this view insist on the Viceroy's visit last year to Syria; on the emissaries sent by him into the province since that time; on the visit of M. Bentivoglio recently to the Viceroy; on the Viceroy's conduct, somewhat suddenly adopted of late as to the Suez Canal; on the overbearing attitude generally adopted by the French Agents in Syria; on French arms, found, as it is said, amongst the Maronites in large quantities; and on the excitement produced by the recent declarations of the Russian Cabinet; and on the course followed within the last few months by the Maronites themselves. Here, they say, is to be found quite sufficient cause for all that has occurred, and for the feelings of indignation and apprehension which rendered the Druses desperate, paralyzed the Ottoman Authorities, and so indisposed the Mussulmans generally as to lead to their desire to abet rather than oppose the

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murderous and plundering hordes which have disgraced the race to which they belonged, at Zahlé, Hasbeyah, and Damascus.

The persons thus arguing will not even admit that many of the events described are accidental in their coincidence; but others imagine they are connected with some preconceived design, which, however, has gone beyond the intentions of its authors. On the other hand, there are others who form notions equally extreme as to the Turks. This, they say, has been nothing more or less than a plot, by which the Ottoman Authorities meant first to destroy the Maronites by the Druses, then the Druses as the consequences of their conduct to the Maronites, and thus finally to establish Turkish supremacy. The truth may perhaps be better found between these two stories.

The intrigues and ambitious character of Said Pasha, the ostentatious protection given by the French to the Maronite tribe, and the somewhat overbearing manner and tone of different agents, as also the attitude assumed by the Russian Cabinet, have no doubt had a considerable influence in producing a feeling of expectancy on one side and of irritation on the other, which were likely at any moment to come into conflict.

On the other hand, the dislike of the Turks to the independent authority of Maronites and Druses has, I doubt not, considerably contributed to their want of timely interference to prevent the state of things which that independent authority engendered from getting worse.

As to the conduct of higher authorities, such as the Pashas, in not openly resisting the Druses, I am myself disposed to think it proceeded solely, or at least mainly, from the feeling that a defeat was likely, and that such defeat would be the signal for a general civil insurrection. This is no excuse for their conduct, but it is an explanation of it. As to the inferior officers, the conduct of some has been so shamefully the effect of fear or fanaticism, that the severest examples should be made amongst them; as to the mob of soldiers or people, the love of pillage and plunder, with want of discipline and authority and the ancient habits of caste and religion, at once account for the crimes and atrocities committed. So much for the past. Looking to the future the first necessity is to restore order and punish crime.

The Turkish Commissioner sent is perhaps the best man that could be found for the duty entrusted to him; at all events his reputation justifies this belief. I have been active in urging the sending of more troops, and though I hardly believe what the Seraskier told me the day before yesterday, that there are already 25,000 men, I should trust there is already a considerable force, which, as I have said, will be increased.

The subsequent settlement of the country is the more difficult affair, and I speak of it with less confidence because I have no local experience. It appears to me that the independent Governments of the Mountain are incompatible with order and society; that one Government should be established in Syria, and that Government ameliorated. A Commission, of which Europeans acquainted with administration and finance should form a part, might be appointed, and, as the result of its inquiries, certain reforms, including tribunals, police, justice in the distribution of taxes, might or should take place.

In case of anything of this general kind being determined upon, however, I should be glad to have your Lordship's permission to visit the country, and thus mature my notions on the spot.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. L. BULWER.

No. 44.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received July 28.)

(No. 990.)

My Lord,

Paris, July 27, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Lordship's telegram dated 2.54 p.m. yesterday.

I saw M. Thouvenel this afternoon with a view of inducing his Excellency to agree that the troops to be sent to Syria should not be disembarked except

at the demand of Fuad Pasha. I could not prevail upon his Excellency to make further concessions on this point than that which your Lordship will have found in the amended draft of Convention transmitted to you yesterday, and which establishes the necessity of an understanding between the French Commander-in-chief in Syria and the Porte's Extraordinary Commissioner. M. Thouvenel declared that he could not consent to leave French troops cooped up in ships in that hot climate, until it might please Fuad Pasha to remove them, nor, the troops once landed, could he abandon their future operations to be decided on by a Turkish authority.

I said that I did not understand your Lordship's proposal to have the extension which M. Thouvenel attributed to it, but Her Majesty's Government, I added, desired that the Sultan's authority should be respected within his own dominions, and that the French troops should appear at least to arrive at the invitation of the Porte.

M. Thouvenel replied that this was made sufficiently clear by the preamble of the Convention. He wished to do no violence to the Sultan's rights of sovereignty, but he could not put French troops under the direction of a Turkish Pasha. If the condition I had mentioned was insisted upon, the Emperor would abandon the project of sending troops.

While the conversation was going on, M. Thouvenel received a telegram from M. de Lavalette, stating that instructions had been transmitted by telegraph yesterday at 2 p.m. to the Turkish Ambassador in Paris, authorizing him to sign the Convention without insisting on the two conditions which were brought under your Lordship's notice in my despatch No. 062 of the 25th instant. It would appear from this that the Porte no longer asks that Fuad Pasha's requisition should be attended to.

With regard to the other matters mentioned in your Lordship's telegram, I hope that the second may be facilitated now that Achmet Effendi will have received his instructions. The principle of the third is, as your Lordship now knows, agreed to, as also the signature of a Protocol similar to that of the 17th September, 1840.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

No. 45.

Lord J. Russell to Earl Cowley.

(No. 747.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, July 28, 1860.

I AM now enabled to give you the opinion of Her Majesty's Government respecting the Convention relating to the expedition to Syria.

The main points appear to be the necessity of obtaining the assent of the Porte explicitly given to the intervention of foreign troops in one of the provinces of the Sultan, and the equal necessity of fixing a term at the end of which such foreign intervention is to cease.

I understand from your despatch No. 990 of the 27th instant, that the Sultan agrees to the admission of foreign troops in Syria. The term of six months should be specified either in the Treaty, or in a separate Protocol which should not be kept secret.

The publicity of this provision is necessary for the justification of Her Majesty's Government in the eyes of the English nation.

The Protocol renouncing all views of separate advantage, territorial or commercial, and all exclusive influence, should be signed on the same day as the Treaty.

The ratifications should be exchanged as soon as possible, and those of the Powers nearest at hand might be exchanged before the ratifications of the more distant Powers are received.

With respect to the terms of the Convention, I send you a memorandum containing amendments which it is very desirable to introduce. They preserve the authority of the Sultan, and keep future stipulations for future contingencies.

It is to be hoped that the measures now taken may vindicate the rights of

humanity, so cruelly outraged in Syria, and at the same time tend to maintain order and obedience in the dominions of the Sultan.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

Inclosure in No. 45.

Amendments suggested in Proposed Treaty respecting the Employment of European Troops in Syria.

Preamble: To add, "and the Sultan having asked the active assistance of his Allies for this purpose." Such a recital would bring the measure more within International Law than as the Convention is framed it would be. Instead of "leurs intentions," which may be construed as applying to the intentions of the last-mentioned Powers, it should be "the before-mentioned intentions."

Article I.—No observation. "Immédiatement" is properly left out.

Article II.—"Immédiatement" should be equally left out here.

Article III.—The last paragraph ought to leave more explicitly the command and distribution of the Ottoman troops to the Ottoman Authorities; perhaps the omission of the word "également" would improve the sentence. Still it leaves the employment of the Turkish troops to be determined by the French Commander, which the Turks might well object to. Would it not be better to omit this paragraph altogether, or to make it reciprocal, by saying the Turk shall communicate with the Frenchman as well as the Frenchman with the Turk?

Article IV.—Amended version would do, omitting the word "maintien," which indicates an occupation of any indefinite duration.

Article V.—This Article seems to open a misty prospect; why contemplate ulterior measures, and what are they, and where to be applied? "Enough for the day." If fresh necessities should arise, fresh negotiations would be as practicable as the present one.

It would be better to confine this Article to the latter engagement, that the Powers "s'entendront pour fixer le moment," &c., and without saying "dès que le but en sera atteint," which would admit of preliminary differences of opinion; but there should certainly be an Article fixing the stay at six months.

Article VI.—"Par tous les moyens en son pouvoir" should be left out, as redundant and unnecessary, unless they were intended as a foundation for demands not now put forward.

No. 46.

Lord J. Russell to Earl Cowley.

(No. 748.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, July 28, 1860.

WITH respect to the proposal of Russia, referred to in your despatch No. 980 of the 26th instant, to insert a declaration in favour of Christians generally in the Convention relating to the expedition to Syria, I have to instruct your Excellency to object to it, as altogether going beyond the present occasion; and if the Russian Ambassador presses it, you will refuse to sign a Convention or Protocol in which any Article to that effect is contained.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 47.

Lord A. Loftus to Lord J. Russell.—(Received July 30.)

(No. 422.)

My Lord,

Vienna, July 26, 1860.

I HAD the honour to receive on the 19th instant your Lordship's telegram of the previous day, informing me that Her Majesty's Government would not object to the landing of French or Austrian troops in Syria, if necessary, according to the terms of a Convention to be agreed upon between the Porte and the Allied Powers, and that it was the intention of Her Majesty's Government not to land troops, but to have a strong force of Marines on the coast.

I lost no time in bringing the substance of your Lordship's telegram to the knowledge of Count Rechberg.

His Excellency appeared to concur in the general view taken by Her Majesty's Government, and expressed his opinion of the desirableness that a complete understanding should exist between the Great Powers on all matters relating to the East, as he considered that on this good understanding would depend a satisfactory solution of the present difficulties and the maintenance of peace.

He expressed his wish to act entirely in concert with Her Majesty's Government on this question, and he repeated to me that the Commander of the Austrian squadron would be strictly enjoined to act in unison with the Commander of Her Majesty's naval forces.

I have, &c.
(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

No. 48.

Lord A. Loftus to Lord J. Russell.—(Received July 30.)

(No. 423.)

My Lord,

Vienna, July 26, 1860.

THE Marquis de Moustier informed me on Friday last, the 20th instant, that he had, in accordance with instructions from his Government, submitted to Count Rechberg, on the previous day, two propositions on the affairs of Syria, to which he had invited the adhesion of the Imperial Government.

These propositions, as your Lordship will have been already informed, relate to: 1st, the appointment of a Mixed Commission for Inquiry into the sanguinary excesses which had taken place in Syria, with a view to punish the perpetrators of them, and to devise measures to prevent their recurrence; and, 2nd, a meeting of the Representatives of the Great Powers at Paris, to concert measures for a military intervention to protect their own subjects, as well as the Christian population.

Count Rechberg expressed his desire to be informed of the opinions of Her Majesty's Government on these proposals. His Excellency stated that he was not opposed to a military intervention, if it should be necessary, and if it were to be previously regulated by means of a Convention between the Powers and the Porte; nor did his Excellency entertain any objection to the appointment of a mixed Commission for the purposes specified, provided that such a course should previously receive the sanction of the Porte. His Excellency informed me at the same time that the Austrian Government were not disposed to send any military forces, but that they would readily participate by sending a reinforcement of two ships of war to the coast of Syria.

Previous to making the communication referred to, the Marquis de Moustier placed in Count Rechberg's hands copy of a circular despatch from M. Thouvenel, dated the 16th instant, which had been likewise addressed to the Cabinets of London, St. Petersburg, Berlin, and (I believe) Madrid. This despatch was explanatory of the opinions of the French Government on the late sad events which had occurred in Syria, and of the course which the Emperor Napoleon deemed it desirable to pursue.

I have, &c.
(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

No. 49.

Lord A. Loftus to Lord J. Russell.—(Received July 30.)

(No. 424.)

My Lord,

Vienna, July 26, 1860.

I COMMUNICATED to Count Rechberg on the 22nd instant the substance of your Lordship's telegram of the previous day, stating that Her Majesty's Government considered a Convention with the Porte as necessary to authorize an expedition of European troops to Syria, and that they likewise agreed in principle to the French propositions.

His Excellency informed me that he had sent instructions to Prince Metternich, authorizing him to attend any Conference at Paris on the affairs of Syria. He read to me the telegram which he had addressed on this subject to Prince Metternich, which was to the following effect, viz., that the Austrian Government adhered to the French proposals for the appointment of a Mixed Commission to inquire into the circumstances of the late excesses in Syria, provided that the Porte should give thereto its sanction, and for an European intervention, if the necessity for it should be proved ("constaté"), and if the Porte should agree to it.

Count Rechberg then informed me that he had received an important communication from the Russian Minister. M. de Balabine had been instructed by Prince Gortchakoff to submit to the Imperial Government a clause which it was the intention of the Russian Government to propose should be inserted in the projected Convention between the Powers and the Porte in the affairs of Syria. This clause was to the effect that the Powers should concert with "the Porte for the protection of the Christians in the Provinces of European Turkey, and that a term should be fixed for the adoption of such measures as would be deemed necessary to correct the present abuses of the Administrative Government, and further that, if any bloody ('sanglants') disturbances should arise, the Powers in accordance with the Porte should be authorized to intervene in the same manner as they should be authorized to do in Syria by the proposed Convention."

Count Rechberg stated that he was fully alive to the dangerous tendency of this proposal, but that it might also be regarded as affording some security for the future ("qu'il avait aussi son bon côté"). On reflection he was of opinion that it would establish both now and hereafter the necessity for a community of action among all the Powers, and thus restrain any isolated intervention on the part of any one of them.

In this light he considered the Russian proposals as offering a safeguard for the future, and he was therefore disposed to view it favourably. At the same time he thought that caution was required, and that the consequences which might arise from its acceptance should be maturely considered, as it was difficult to see what ulterior designs might be concealed behind this screen.

He accordingly requested me to inquire of your Lordship the views and opinions of Her Majesty's Government on this subject.

On the receipt of your Lordship's telegram of the 23rd instant, in reply to this inquiry, I immediately informed Count Rechberg that Her Majesty's Government could not admit the clause proposed by Prince Gortchakoff, that it appeared to them to open the door to fresh intervention, and that it would be better to wait till the case to be dealt with arose. I further communicated to his Excellency the substance of the remainder of your Lordship's telegram.

Count Rechberg, who was on the eve of his departure with the Emperor for Toplitz, charged Baron Koller to reply to me that, if the report that order had been re-established in Syria, and that a Treaty had been signed between the Druses and Maronites, should be confirmed, he considered that neither a Convention nor an intervention would be necessary, and that, consequently, the Russian proposal would fall to the ground.

But his Excellency stated that if all the other Powers should adhere to the Russian clause he was disposed to do so likewise. On this point I am inclined to think that Count Rechberg is not anxious to put himself unnecessarily forward

in opposition to Russia, but that will rather follow in the wake of the majority of the Great Powers.

I have, &c.
(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

No. 50.

Lord A. Loftus to Lord J. Russell.—(Received July 30.)

(No. 425.)

My Lord,

Vienna, July 26, 1860.

THE Marquis de Moustier called on me yesterday, and informed me that he had just communicated to Baron Koller the draft of a Convention to be entered into between the Powers and the Porte to regulate the intervention of European troops in Syria.

His Excellency stated, that this project of Convention was based on the two French propositions which had been adhered to by all the Powers, with the exception of Prussia, from whom, owing to the absence of the Prince Regent and of Baron Schleinitz from Berlin, no answer had been yet received.

In reply to my inquiry whether there was any limit stated therein to the number of the troops to be employed, his Excellency said, that the number was left in blank, to be filled up when the Representatives met at Paris.

This project of Convention was forwarded yesterday to Count Rechberg to Toplitz. It is probable that no reply will be given on this subject until his Excellency's return to Vienna on Saturday next.

In speaking to Baron Koller on the nature of this Convention, he observed, that there was a clause stipulating that the expenses of the foreign intervention would have to be defrayed by the Porte; and his Excellency appeared to consider this as a heavy charge on a country for foreign intervention, wholly unsolicited on its part.

I have, &c.
(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

No. 51.

Lord Bloomfield to Lord J. Russell.—(Received July 30.)

(No. 275.)

My Lord,

Berlin, July 28, 1860.

BARON SCHLEINITZ mentioned to me to-day, that he had just heard from Paris that the Porte had signified their acquiescence in the project of Convention proposed by the French Government on the subject of the intended military intervention in Syria; and he asked me if I knew what were the opinions of Her Majesty's Government respecting this affair. I replied, that your Lordship had sent for my information the copy of a despatch which you had addressed to Earl Cowley on the 23rd instant, and that I would read it to him.

Baron Schleinitz thanked me for this communication, and said that he was very glad to know the opinion of Her Majesty's Government on some of the Articles of the proposed Convention, and that he entirely agreed with the observations which your Lordship had made to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Paris. I may add, that his Excellency seemed to think it essential to fix a term for the period of the occupation; and he disapproved equally with Her Majesty's Government of the idea of rendering the Porte liable to the expenses of the French expedition.

Baron Schleinitz asked if your Lordship had written to me on the subject of an Additional Article proposed by Russia, the object of which was to render the circumstances of the intended intervention in Syria equally applicable to the Provinces of European Turkey, as he understood that Her Majesty's Ambassador at Paris had expressed his disapproval of the insertion of such an Article in the proposed Convention. I answered that I was uninformed on this point. His Excellency then said that he was inclined to come round to

Count Rechberg's opinion respecting the Russian proposal, for he thought it might tend to prevent rather than to encourage the isolated action of Russia in European Turkey.

I have, &c.
(Signed) BLOOMFIELD.

No. 52.

Lord J. Russell to Lord Dufferin.

(No. 1.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, July 30, 1860.

HER Majesty has selected your Lordship to represent the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland in the Commission which is about to be appointed to inquire into the late lamentable events in Syria.

Your Lordship will proceed at once to Constantinople, and there obtain your instructions from Sir Henry Bulwer. Her Majesty's Ambassador will furnish you with all the preliminary information necessary to the due discharge of your functions.

The chief object of the Commission will be to obtain security for the future peace of Syria.

But internal peace cannot be obtained without a speedy, pure, and impartial administration of justice. Those who suffer wrong, and see that wrong committed with impunity, take punishment into their own hands, or rather substitute revenge for due and legal retribution.

You will pay respect to the authorities named by the Sultan, and you will always bear in mind that in territorial acquisition no exclusive influence, no separate commercial advantage is sought by Her Majesty's Government, nor should be acquired by any of the Great Powers.

I will transmit to you a copy of the Convention respecting Syria as soon as it is signed at Paris.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 53.

Lord J. Russell to Lord Dufferin.

(No. 2.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, July 31, 1860.

I HAVE informed your Lordship in my despatch of yesterday's date, that you will receive instructions from Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople for your guidance in Syria, and I have now to desire that your reports may be addressed to Sir H. Bulwer, who will forward them to me.

If your Lordship, however, should at any time have an opportunity of sending letters to this country, you may send to me, direct, copies of your reports to Sir H. Bulwer.

Mr. Meade, of this office, will be attached to your Lordship's Mission, and you will employ him in such manner as you may think desirable for the benefit of the public service.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 54.

Lord J. Russell to Sir H. Bulwer.

(No. 379.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, July 31, 1860.

I INFORMED your Excellency by my telegram of the 28th instant that a person of rank would be sent from this country to act as British Commissioner to Syria.

I have now to acquaint you that Lord Dufferin has been selected for this service, and that he has been directed to proceed in the first instance to Constantinople, in order that he may learn from your Excellency the manner in which the duties assigned to him can best be performed for the benefit of the public service.

I have accordingly to desire that your Excellency will furnish Lord Dufferin, in communication and concert with the Sultan's Ministers, with instructions for his guidance, and I transmit to you copies of the letters which I have addressed to him regarding his temporary appointment.*

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 55.

M. Musurus to Lord J. Russell.—(Received July 31.)

Londres, le 30 Juillet, 1860.

L'AMBASSADEUR de la Sublime Porte à Londres vient de recevoir de son Gouvernement une dépêche télégraphique qu'il est invité à communiquer à son Excellence Lord John Russell.

D'après cette dépêche, qui porte la date du 27 Juillet, Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan a, sur la demande de l'Angleterre et de la France, autorisé son Ambassadeur à Paris à négocier et à signer une Convention avec les Puissances, relativement à l'envoi d'un corps de troupes en Syrie, si tel est leur commun avis.

A cette occasion, la Sublime Porte déclare que, si elle a adopté cette décision, c'est pour donner à ses Alliées une preuve de sa confiance, et de son loyal désir de réprimer les désordres qu'elle déplore plus que personne.

Toutefois, elle n'a pas laissé ignorer aux Représentants de France et d'Angleterre à Constantinople tous les inconvénients et tous les dangers que pourrait amener une intervention de cette nature. Elle leur a fait observer que l'arrivée de troupes étrangères sur un point du territoire Ottoman pourrait, d'un bout à l'autre de l'Empire, éveiller chez les différentes populations des sentiments différents, dont les résultats pourraient devenir on ne peut plus désastreux. En effet, la partie turbulente des populations Chrétiennes, interprétant la résolution des Puissances comme une assistance en leur faveur contre les Musulmans, pourrait se laisser aller à des excès. D'un autre côté, ceux d'entre les Musulmans qui ne sont pas en état d'apprécier les véritables intentions de l'Europe, désespérés et irrités de se voir traités avec tant de méfiance, par cela seul que les Druses et une poignée de malfaiteurs qui n'ont de Musulman que le nom qu'ils portent se sont permis des actes qu'ils réprouvent eux-mêmes, pourraient répondre à ces excès par d'autres excès. Il est évident que les malheurs qui seraient capable d'amener un pareil état de choses, rallumeraient des haines que le Gouvernement fait tout son possible pour éteindre.

De plus, une fois l'idée répandue parmi les populations Musulmanes que le Gouvernement appelle des forces étrangères pour punir ses co-religionnaires, l'autorité souveraine perdrait en partie son prestige à leurs yeux.

Enfin, le Gouvernement Impérial, ayant pris les mesures les plus propres à venger les horreurs commises, et ayant envoyé le Ministre des Affaires Étrangères avec des pouvoirs illimités, est convaincu que, par l'aide de Dieu, il est en état de réprimer seul le désordre et de châtier les coupables.

En conséquence, la Sublime Porte ne voit aucune nécessité de recourir à une mesure qui serait capable de faire naître de si grands périls, et qui, en tout cas, constituerait une sorte d'atteinte au droit de souveraineté de Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan.

La Sublime Porte espère que ces observations franches et loyales seront prises en sérieuse considération par le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Britannique ; et c'est dans cet espoir qu'elle les a communiquées à MM. les Représentants, qui lui ont promis de les transmettre à leurs Cours respectives.

Agréé, &c.
(Signé) MUSURUS.

* Nos. 52 and 53.

No. 56.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received August 1.)

(No. 1,002.)

My Lord,

Paris, July 30, 1860.

I HAD the honour to receive yesterday morning your Lordship's despatch No. 747 of the preceding day, containing instructions for my guidance with respect to the Convention relating to the expedition to Syria.

Vefik Effendi having also received his instructions, and the remaining Representatives of the Five Powers being in possession of the sentiments of their respective Governments, M. Thouvenel requested us to meet again in Conference. The meeting took place this afternoon, and resulted in the adoption of an amended project, a copy of which I have the honor to inclose. The passages in red denote the modifications introduced into the original project.

My colleagues, at M. Thouvenel's inquiry, expressed their readiness to place their initials to this project. I preferred submitting it for your Lordship's consideration, and I request you to let me know, with as little delay as possible, whether it is the pleasure of Her Majesty's Government that I should give their sanction to it. I find that my colleagues are none of them in possession of the full powers necessary to sign a Convention, and as some little time must elapse before they can receive them, M. Thouvenel asked whether the Convention might not be acted upon as soon as the initials of the Plenipotentiaries, who concluded it, should be affixed to it.

My colleagues expressed their assent. I again requested permission to await your Lordship's directions.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

Inclosure in No. 56.

Amended Project of Protocol.

LES Plénipotentiaires de _____, désirant établir, conformément aux intentions de leurs Cours respectives, le véritable caractère du concours prêté à la Sublime Porte aux termes de la Convention conclue en ce jour (ou le _____) les sentiments qui leur ont dicté les clauses de cet acte et leur entier désintéressement, déclarent de la manière la plus formelle que les Puissances Contractantes n'entendent poursuivre ni ne poursuivront dans l'exécution de leurs engagements, aucun avantage territorial, aucune influence exclusive, ni aucune concession touchant le commerce de leurs sujets et qui ne pourrait être accordée aux sujets de toutes les autres nations.

Néanmoins, ils ne peuvent se séparer sans rappeler ici les actes émanés du Sultan dont l'Article IX du Traité du 30 Mars, 1856, a constaté la haute valeur, ni sans exprimer le prix que leurs Cours respectives attachent à ce que, conformément aux promesses solennelles de la Sublime Porte, il soit pris des mesures administratives sérieuses pour l'amélioration du sort des populations Chrétiennes de tout rite de l'Empire Ottoman.

Le Plénipotentiaire de la Sublime Porte Ottomane prend acte de cette déclaration des Représentants des Hautes Puissances Contractantes, et se charge de la transmettre à sa Cour.

No. 57.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received August 1.)

(No. 1,003.)

My Lord,

Paris, July 31, 1860.

AS at the Conference held on the 26th instant the Turkish Ambassador had declared himself to be without the necessary instructions to enable him to assent to the occupation of Syria by foreign troops, I thought it advisable, after

receiving your Lordship's despatch No. 747 of the 28th instant, and before making any further communications to M. Thouvenel of the opinions of Her Majesty's Government contained in it, to see the Turkish Ambassador, to ascertain from him the nature of the instructions which I had been informed he had since received, and to learn how far and under what conditions the Porte was disposed to ask for or to admit of the occupation by foreign troops of a part of the Sultan's dominions. Accordingly I saw Vefyk Effendi early yesterday morning.

His Excellency said that he was empowered to sign a Convention with the Representatives of the Five Powers at Paris which should sanction the employment of European troops in Syria under certain conditions. He did not wish, he continued, to throw unnecessary obstacles into the way of an immediate conclusion of the Convention, but he must ask for certain explanations, in order that he might understand fully the nature of the obligations which he was called upon to contract in the name of his Government. He desired, therefore, that the number of men to be sent should be specified, and that the period for their return should be fixed. He understood that it was only intended in the first instance to send 6,000 French soldiers, but if this number was to be added to by troops furnished by other Powers, as the project of Protocol rendered possible, he wished to be assured that the Porte should be consulted equally with the other Powers in the designation of those troops. He considered that no movement of the troops to be landed in Syria should take place without previous intimation to the Porte's Extraordinary Commissioner, and he desired that it should be distinctly specified in the last Article, that the Porte should not be called upon to defray any of the expenses caused by, or arising out of, the wants of the expedition. But Vefyk Effendi gave me distinctly to understand that his Government was so convinced of the friendly dispositions of Her Majesty's Government, that he should be ready to sign any Convention which might meet with their approbation.

Having thus ascertained the sentiments of the Porte's Representative, I waited on M. Thouvenel, and after a long conversation, during which he evinced considerable reluctance to adopt several of the modifications which, either in pursuance of your Lordship's instructions or of the wishes expressed to me by Vefyk Effendi, I proposed, we came to an understanding upon a project in an amended form, which he agreed to accept in Conference. I again saw Vefyk Effendi before the Conference took place, and he expressed himself satisfied with the project, provided that certain questions which he intended to put should be answered in a satisfactory manner.

The principal objections which had been raised by M. Thouvenel were to any modification of Article III, defining the relative positions of the Turkish Commissioner Extraordinary and the French Commander-in-chief, to the fixation of the period of occupation, and to the introduction of a clause into Article VI, absolving the Porte from all expenses arising from the troops of occupation. M. Thouvenel considered that the last proposal was so objectionable, as implying a doubt of the intentions of the French Government, that the Turkish Ambassador abandoned it.

The Conference met at 3 o'clock, when the Convention was agreed to by the Plenipotentiaries in the amended form shown in the inclosure to my despatch No. 1,002 of yesterday's date. These modifications having been settled beforehand, there was but little discussion of the different clauses.

With respect to Article II, M. Thouvenel observed, that if it should be found necessary to augment the army of occupation he hoped that the other Powers would be found ready to furnish their contingents, for that he was most anxious that this should not be considered in the light of a French expedition, but that the French Government was, as it were, delegated by Europe to undertake it in the first instance.

The Prussian Plenipotentiary remarked with reference to Article IV, that the word "promettent" bound his Government to send a naval force to the coasts of Syria, a promise which it might not be possible for them to realise. He asked that this expression should be modified, but as the French Plenipotentiary held to the fulfilment of this engagement by the other Powers, and as it was considered inconvenient to omit the name of Prussia altogether, I recommended Prince Reuss to consign his observation to a Protocol, as it would probably be found necessary to sign an instrument of that nature.

The attention of the Turkish Plenipotentiary had been called to reports of the intention of the Greek Government to send troops to Syria, and he considered it necessary to declare that his Government would protest, and if necessary would oppose by force, any fulfilment of such intention. The other Plenipotentiaries, one and all, declared that, in their opinion, no foreign troops could enter the Sultan's dominions without the express consent of the Sovereign, but M. Thouvenel said that he made an exception in cases where immediate danger threatened. Supposing, said his Excellency, a massacre were to take place at Smyrna, foreign ships of war would be justified in landing troops or seamen for the protection of their Consuls and countrymen. Vefyk Effendi did not dissent from this doctrine. I said that the Turkish Ambassador's observation would also find a proper place in a Protocol.

M. Thouvenel took occasion to say, that although, in the opinion of the Imperial Government, six months would more than suffice for the restoration of tranquillity in Syria, and that the troops of occupation might well be brought away within that time, yet that circumstances might arise over which the French Government could have no control, such as illness among the troops, or continual bad weather, on a very exposed coast, which could physically prevent the fulfilment of Article V. Unforeseen events even might occur to render a prolongation of the occupation necessary. I observed that, with regard to the two first contingencies, nobody could be expected to do that which was impossible, and that with respect to the third, there was always the possibility of summoning a fresh Conference.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

No. 58.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received August 1.)

(No. 1,005. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Paris, July 31, 1860.

DURING the interview which I had with M. Thouvenel yesterday morning, of which a report is given in my preceding despatch, his Excellency said that the Russian Government appeared determined not to permit their Representative to sign the Convention relative to the expedition to Syria, unless the general declaration respecting the Christians in Turkey, which his Excellency had communicated to me, and which was inclosed in my despatch No. 980 of the 26th instant, should be assented to by the remaining Great Powers. He had done his best at St. Petersburg, he said, to induce the Russian Government to abandon this proposal, but he had unfortunately failed. The Austrian and Prussian Representatives had received instructions to support it, and he himself, while expressing his regret that the Russian Government should have brought it forward at this moment, should be obliged to admit that the situation of the Christian subjects of the Porte called for amelioration. He hoped, therefore, that I was in a position to take a similar line.

I said that my instructions were positive, and that I would take no part whatever in discussing, much less in assenting to, the introduction of the Russian proposal into the Convention, or even into a Protocol.

M. Thouvenel said that he feared that under these circumstances the Convention would come to an untimely end; and he asked me to ascertain whether Her Majesty's Government would not consent to a more modified declaration, in order to meet the wishes of Russia. I begged M. Thouvenel to address himself to M. de Persigny, observing that my instructions were so positive that it would not be proper in me to seek to change them; but his Excellency replied, that this question not having been treated in any of his despatches to M. de Persigny, a long explanation would be required to make him understand it, and he again appealed to me.

I gave a reluctant consent, and addressed to your Lordship, in consequence, the telegram dated 1.15 P.M. yesterday. I trust that, under the circumstances, your Lordship will not disapprove my having complied with M. Thouvenel's request.

I may remark, that a friend of mine has seen the telegram sent to the

Duc de Montebello, enjoining him to use all his efforts to induce Prince Gortchakoff to desist from his proposal, and I have myself seen that Ambassador's reply; and I have reason to think, from the contents of these two documents, that M. Thouvenel has done what depended on him to prevent the Russian proposal from being brought forward.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

No. 59.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received August 1.)

(No. 1,006. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Paris, July 31, 1860.

AFTER the project of Convention to which I have alluded in my despatch No. 1,003 of this day's date, had been discussed and adopted by the Conference yesterday, M. Thouvenel informed the Representatives assembled, that the Russian Ambassador had a proposal to make to them. General Kisseleff then stated that he had received orders from his Government to ask that an Article should be added to the Convention, applying its stipulations to other parts of the Sultan's dominions where the Christians might want similar protection; but that if this proposal should meet with insuperable objections, he was charged to invite the Plenipotentiaries to consign to a Protocol a declaration which he read, and which is identic with that inclosed in my despatch No. 980 of the 26th instant. General Kisseleff added, that unless one or other of these propositions were adopted, he would be precluded by his instructions from signing the Convention.

The Turkish Ambassador declared that he must protest at once, and in the most formal manner, against the proposal; nay more, if it was persisted in, he must refuse to sign the Convention. He characterised the proposal as a direct attack upon the independence of his Sovereign, and as fraught with danger not only to the Turkish Empire, but, from the consequences which its adoption might entail, to Europe in general.

M. Thouvenel disputed with some warmth the right of the Turkish Plenipotentiary to protest in the name of his Government without a previous reference to Constantinople; and he exclaimed against the declaration of that functionary, that if the Russian proposal was persisted in he would not sign the Convention.

I said that the Turkish Plenipotentiary must be better acquainted than we could be with his duties towards his own Government, and that I could well understand his hesitating to sign a Convention which permitted a foreign occupation of a part of his Sovereign's dominions, but the stipulations of which it was further sought to apply to other parts of the Empire. For my part, I added I could agree to neither of the Russian propositions. My instructions did not contemplate them in any way; they had been drawn up with reference to a specific and not to a general question.

After some further conversation, General Kisseleff modified his proposal in the following manner: that a Protocol should be drawn up and signed, *séance tenante*, to which his propositions should be consigned, with a request that the Plenipotentiaries would submit them for the consideration of their respective Governments; that the expedition to Syria should be proceeded with in the meantime, and the general question be left open for discussion.

I said that I regretted that I could not acquiesce in this proposal; I could not sign any Protocol which contained matter foreign to the special case for which we had been convened, nor could I be the channel of conveying to your Lordship the proposals of the Russian Cabinet, which ought to be made from Government to Government. I could not understand why the Russian Plenipotentiary should consent to the departure of the expedition, and yet refuse to sign the Convention which would alone sanction the expedition itself. But the most extraordinary notion I had ever heard of, was that of applying the stipulations of a Convention framed for a special purpose in an extensive sense, and that too while the Convention was still a project only, it not having yet been signed; for, in fact, the Russian Plenipotentiary, if I understood his proposal

rightly, would bind the Powers to apply to Turkey in general the stipulations which he refused to sign when applicable to Syria only.

M. Thouvenel said, that he thought that I could not refuse to sign a Protocol rehearsing what had passed in a Conference; I might of course make what observations I pleased upon any proposal made, they would be equally consigned to the Protocol. I replied, that by consenting to sign such a Protocol I should be aiding in giving publicity to a proposal which Her Majesty's Government considered objectionable; that, in fact, as soon as the discussion of the Convention had been finished, I should have been justified in taking my departure, and that if, from a feeling of courtesy, I had remained, I did not consider myself in the least bound to put my name to a document recounting what had passed after the Conference, as far as I was concerned, was over. In truth, we were all placed in a most awkward position by the proceedings of the Russian Plenipotentiary, for we could not finish a work which the French Government thought of the greatest importance, unless we consented to take into our consideration questions irrelevant to the case before us.

M. Thouvenel admitted that the Russian Government, no doubt without intending it, was the cause of the stand-still to which we were reduced, and he requested General Kisseleff to represent to his Government what had occurred, and to ask them to desist from their proposal.

The Austrian and Prussian Plenipotentiaries took but little part in the discussion. They merely announced their readiness to accede to the Russian proposal.

I should add, that the whole discussion passed in perfect good temper, though it may perhaps appear otherwise to your Lordship, when reading this summary account of it.

I have &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

No. 60.

Lord J. Russell to Sir H. Bulwer.

(No. 386.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, August 1, 1860.

THE paper of which the inclosed is a copy, was brought to me by M. Musurus.*

Her Majesty's Government are well aware of the evils attendant upon a foreign occupation. Nothing but the extreme misconduct of the Turkish Pashas and the Turkish troops in Syria could have induced Her Majesty's Government to consent to the proposal of France; and even the massacres of the Lebanon might have been left to the vigilant justice of Fuad Pasha, had not the disastrous news from Damascus shown that even in one of the principal cities of the Empire the Turkish Authorities were incapable of protecting the lives of Christians. Whether the failure arose from want of power or want of will, the want of security to life and property was equally evident.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 61.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received August 2.)

(No. 1,010.)

My Lord,

Paris, August 1, 1860.

I SAW M. Thouvenel for a few moments this afternoon, and found him in possession of news from Beyrout to the 24th, and from Damascus to the 17th ultimo. According to the accounts which he had received 8,000 victims had fallen in the latter town. It appears further that Fuad Pasha had asked for reinforcements and for money. Under these circumstances M. Thouvenel is urgent for the departure of the expedition.

* No. 55.

It is clear, however, that if that departure is to depend on the signature of the Convention, some time must still elapse before it can move, for, as I had the honour to inform your Lordship in my despatch No. 1,002 of the 30th, none of the Plenipotentiaries who have taken part in the Conferences on the subject are in possession of the full powers which would, according to custom, alone authorize them to sign their names to such an act, although some of them have been empowered by telegraph to do so. The only way of remedying this state of things would be the signature of some sort of Protocol as of that of which a project is herewith inclosed, a proceeding which I believe will be urged on Her Majesty's Government by M. Thouvenel. It appears to me that there will be less inconvenience in adopting this course than in establishing the precedent of permitting the signature of a Convention without the previous customary exhibition by the Plenipotentiaries of their respective full powers, or of allowing the stipulations of such an instrument to take effect upon the simple recognition of its Articles by the initials of the Plenipotentiaries.

Your Lordship will find a slight variation in the wording of that part of the inclosed project of Protocol which answers to the preamble of the Convention. It has been thought better to make the Allies offer their assistance to the Sultan, and to represent the Sultan as accepting their offer. It is a faithful record of what has taken place, the independent action of the Sultan is equally guaranteed by it, and it prevents the placing of the Turkish Ambassador in contradiction with his own words, which in the commencement of this business were adverse to any European intervention in Syria. I venture to hope that your Lordship will approve this slight modification.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

Inclosure in No. 61.

Project of Protocol.

SA Majesté Impériale le Sultan voulant arrêter, par des mesures promptes et efficaces, l'effusion du sang en Syrie et témoigner de sa ferme résolution d'assurer l'ordre et la paix parmi les populations placées sous sa souveraineté, et leurs Majestés l'Empereur d'Autriche, l'Empereur des Français, la Reine du Royaume Uni de la Grande Bretagne et d'Irlande, Son Altesse Royale le Prince Régent de Prusse, et Sa Majesté l'Empereur de toutes les Russies, ayant offert leur co-opération active à cet effet, et cette co-opération ayant été acceptée par Sa Majesté le Sultan, les Représentants de leurs dites Majestés et de sa dite Altesse Royale, réunis en Conférence, sont tombés d'accord sur les points suivants :—

ARTICLE I.

Un corps de troupes Européennes, qui pourra être porté à 12,000 hommes, sera dirigé en Syrie pour contribuer au rétablissement de la tranquillité.

ARTICLE II.

Sa Majesté l'Empereur des Français consent à fournir immédiatement la moitié de ce corps de troupes. S'il devenait nécessaire d'élever son effectif au chiffre stipulé dans l'Article précédent, les Hautes Parties s'entendraient sans retard, par la voie diplomatique ordinaire, sur la désignation de celle des Puissances qui auraient à y pourvoir.

ARTICLE III.

Le Commandant-en-chef de l'expédition entrera, à son arrivée, en communication avec le Commissaire Extraordinaire de la Porte afin de combiner toutes les mesures exigées par les circonstances et de prendre les positions qu'il y aura lieu d'occuper pour remplir l'objet du présent Acte.

ARTICLE IV.

Leurs Majestés l'Empereur d'Autriche, l'Empereur des Français, la Reine du Royaume Uni de la Grande Bretagne et d'Irlande, Son Altesse Royale le Prince Régent de Prusse, et Sa Majesté l'Empereur de toutes les Russies, promettent d'entretenir des forces navales suffisantes pour concourir au succès des efforts communs par le rétablissement de la tranquillité sur le littoral de Syrie.

ARTICLE V.

Les Hautes Parties Contractantes, convaincues que ce délai sera suffisant pour atteindre le but de pacification qu'elles ont en vue, fixent à six mois la durée de l'occupation des troupes Européennes en Syrie.

ARTICLE VI.

La Sublime Porte s'engage à faciliter, autant qu'il dépendra d'elle, la subsistance et l'approvisionnement du corps expéditionnaire.

Il est entendu que les six Articles précédents seront textuellement, en autant que faire se pourra, convertis en une Convention, qui recevra les signatures des Représentants soussignés aussitôt qu'ils seront munis des pleins pouvoirs de leurs Souverains, mais les stipulations de ce Protocole entreront immédiatement en vigueur.

No. 62.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received August 2.)

(No. 1,016.)

My Lord,

Paris, August 1, 1860.

IT was natural that the Porte should look with some suspicion on the nomination of General Beaufort, who, in the last Syrian war, served in Ibrahim Pasha's army against the Sultan's troops, to the command of the French expedition going to that country, and Vefik Effendi has expressed himself in this sense to M. Thouvenel. General Beaufort was, in consequence, desired to visit the Turkish Ambassador, with a view of reassuring him, and his Excellency informs me that he had every reason to be satisfied with the tone of that officer's conversation, and that he can only trust that the General's acts will correspond with his words.

I have, &c.

(Signed) COWLEY.

No. 63.

Lord J. Russell to Lord Bloomfield.

(No. 146.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, August 2, 1860.

HER Majesty's Government have directed Lord Cowley to resist the introduction of the proposed Russian Article in the Convention respecting Syria. They have done so for two reasons.

The first is, that the circumstances of Syria are well known, and have excited horror in all Europe.

But it would be difficult to define the degree of massacre which would justify interference in the European Provinces of Turkey; and if we could do so, there would be an obvious temptation to the discontented subjects of the Sultan to get up just so much of outrage and disturbance as might justify intervention.

In the next place, Her Majesty's Government think it unwise to promise, or exact a promise of a new organization of Turkey, without specifying what

that organization is to be. In the opinion of Her Majesty's Government, the question is one which ought to be maturely considered by the Representatives of the Five Powers at Constantinople. But to provide beforehand, in vague and indefinite terms, for foreign intervention, both military and political, would merely serve the purpose of the agents of revolution, and tend to dissolve the remaining elements of order and authority in European Turkey.

I am, &c.

(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 64.

Sir H. Bulwer to Lord J. Russell.—(Received August 3.)

(No. 439.)

My Lord,

Therapia, July 25, 1860.

M. DE LAVALETTE communicated to me to-day a telegram from his Government stating that M. de Thouvenel had come to an understanding with your Lordship, including, first, an European Commission, attended by Ottoman Delegates, which were to proceed to Syria to arrange, as I understand, the affairs of the Lebanon; and, secondly, an intervention with European troops in Syria in which the French were to take a principal part.

M. de Lavalette was to obtain the assistance of the Porte to those provisions, and also the transmission of full powers to Vefik Effendi to arrange a Convention in which other Governments would take a part for the above objects.

I told the Marquis that as to the Commission, I approved of it and had orders to support it; that as to the agreement concerning an armed intervention, I was at present without instructions.

I saw Aali Pasha subsequently with the French Ambassador. His Highness was much moved, and spoke with the greatest emotion, observing that the alternative offered to him was most serious, and that he must consult his colleagues and the Sultan; but that he could truly and honestly assure us as his own opinion, that such an armed intervention as that spoken of would leave the Ottoman Government in its present difficulties powerless, and that he could not answer for any catastrophe that might occur.

Aali Pasha, however, though an amiable and intelligent man, is not perhaps the precise Minister for a situation of this kind; he sees the difficulty on all sides too clearly to be able to take a decided part one way or the other; and I, therefore, do not say that his views will either be persevered in, or are to be relied upon.

For my own part, I find it difficult to speak as to Syria, concerning which I receive such conflicting and varying information. I should think, however, that in the Province of Syria itself the landing of European troops would, as far as Syria is concerned, be productive of advantage, both in reassuring the Christian population and reinforcing the Turkish authority, if properly regulated.

But whether it might not produce another effect in other parts of Asia, is a different question. As to Constantinople and European Turkey generally, I am inclined to think that the intervention in question in the present excited state of the public mind may, unless some precautions are taken, produce disasters by elating the Christian body, and depressing the central authority. But if the Christians are not led away by this movement into committing excesses, I should say that, as far as my observation extends, the first steps towards a religious and political conflict would not be taken by the Turks.

Another peril, however, is to be apprehended. I have explained the state of the Turkish finances. I have explained the condition of the soldiery, and the general distress also into which the stoppage of credit and the dissatisfaction of claimants has thrown the commerce of the capital. To adopt stringent measures of economy, which always produce temporary discontent, or to impose new taxes as a means of raising a revenue, is at this moment replete with danger. New resources must be found in the Empire itself—can be found, and ought to be both sought for and used;—but as an immediate step to satisfy the troops in arrear of pay, and relieve the poorer classes, some immediate funds in specie

are almost absolutely necessary. A million and a half would, I think, suffice for such urgent wants. It is most essential it should be obtained.

To say nothing of the loss of life and the destruction of property which a tumult in this city would produce, the hinderance it would give to trade (particularly when grain from the Black Sea may be required) is in itself a consideration. I press the subject then again on your Lordship's attention; any arrangement relating to the purchase of timber for Her Majesty's Government might possibly furnish, in a legitimate manner, a portion of the means required.

Perhaps the two Governments of France and England, under the circumstances might, on adequate security, make some advance, and couple it with conditions which would fix the future revenue on a more solid basis. Perhaps some latitude might be left to the Representatives of the two Governments as to the objects for which the advances should be applied, and a guarantee taken.

All this I have, I know, said before, still I venture to repeat it, as each day presses the importance of doing something in the matter more upon me.

By the advance to which I allude, immense calamities which no sum can afterwards repair may indeed be prevented; and evils turned aside, which, if they occur, may cause millions and millions to be spent without an effective result. Your Lordship will, I am sure, pardon me if, under the influence of what is passing around me, I dwell too much upon this point, and urge what may be well if it were practicable, but which cannot perhaps practically be effected.

At all events, the impressions on my mind are, judging from what he says, more strongly felt by my French colleague, whose apprehensions I have hitherto endeavoured to calm. The words of Aali Pasha to-day, however, were evidently so sincere, and at the same time so strong, that I cannot treat them with disregard. As to the loan at Paris, we still hear it is going on, but as all that reaches us is from the French Agent, M. Court, and that is not very clear, I cannot undertake to say whether the fears I have always as yet entertained as to its improbability were well founded, or whether there are really hopes of its being obtained.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. L. BULWER.

No. 65.

Sir H. Bulwer to Lord J. Russell.—(Received August 3.)

(No. 443.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, July 25, 1860.

I BEG to inclose translation of the firman issued to Fuad Pasha, conferring on him full powers for punishing all persons who have had a hand in the effusion of human blood in Syria.

The Turkish Government has also issued a circular instruction to all Provincial Governors, of which a translation will follow.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. L. BULWER.

Inclosure in No. 65.

Firman.

(Translation.)

TO my Vizier, Mehemed Fuad, one of the most illustrious Ministers and Chief Councillors of my Empire, and Minister for Foreign Affairs, now appointed on an extraordinary and special mission to Syria, with full powers on my part, decorated with the first classes of the Orders of Medjidie and of distinction, and bearer of the Nishan Ifihar of military service.

You who are my zealous Vizier as above.

I have learnt with the greatest concern the outbreak of war between the

Maronites and Druses who inhabit Mount Lebanon in Syria, owing to a quarrel which has, as you know, arisen between them.

I need not tell you that the favourite object of my wishes is, that every class of my subjects, who are all equal in my eyes, should enjoy perfect security, ease, and contentment, and it is most especially and particularly my desire, that one people should not in any mode whatsoever commit an aggressive act on another. Therefore, the cruel and tyrannical acts which have been perpetrated in Mount Lebanon are altogether contrary to my wish, and it has become necessary to charge specially, and with full powers, some able, zealous, and intelligent person, for the purpose of putting an end to those excesses, and remove (or destroy) the persons who have provoked these internal troubles, and caused the effusion of human blood.

You are my intelligent Mushir above-mentioned, and one of my most illustrious Ministers, endowed with the above qualities, and in whom I have the most perfect confidence, I have ordered that you be appointed to this important charge with full powers on my part, and a sufficient number of troops has also been sent. So that acting with that perfect knowledge of state affairs, as well as with that zeal and intelligence which distinguishes you, and in accordance with your duty you will, God helping, immediately start from here for that place, where you will be the referee of all civil and military functionaries. You will, by adopting the necessary measures, cause to cease the confusion and civil war which has ensued between the above Maronites and Druses, and procure the return of peace and security to those parts. You will ascertain who have been instrumental in the odious act of shedding human blood, and immediately punish them according to the prescriptions of my Imperial Code. In a word, you are freely intrusted with the adoption of all the military and civil measures, for the extinction of this evil. You will, therefore, act accordingly. Such is my order, &c.

(No date.)

No. 66.

Sir H. Bulwer to Lord J. Russell.—(Received August 3.)

(No. 446.)

My Lord,

Therapia, July 25, 1860.

ON receiving your Lordship's second telegram stating that a corps of European troops was to be sent to Syria in concert with the Sublime Porte and the Great Powers, I immediately communicated the same to Aali Pasha, and went to him that evening and had a long conversation with him.

His fears and agitation as to the consequences are, I think, excessive; these were evident at our last interview (which is related in a former despatch), and are not yet dissipated. Still he said that the Government had determined to consent to the Commission and Convention and the sending of European troops to Syria.

These would necessarily arrive at some specified point in Syria, say Beyrout, Alexandretta, or another. What Aali wishes is, that when there, they should only be employed in the interior at the requisition of Fuad Pasha, and he said it was only in this way that he could get the consent of the Cabinet to the measure.

I told him that he had better not make small difficulties, but use large and general terms, consenting to, and indeed inviting the European intervention in question, which should act in concert with the Turkish Commissioner.

I reminded him that I had told him when Fuad Pasha departed that I thought if any further misfortune happened, European intervention was inevitable; and it was then at my advice that he (Aali Pasha) had taken a step in the advance, by writing to M. Musurus, and instructing him to say it would be asked for if required.

This preparatory step smoothed the way without loss of dignity for a further step, which the horrors committed at Damascus rendered necessary. Leaving him uncertain as to the words of his reply, I wrote to him again in the morning, urging him "d'entrer pleinement dans l'indignation de l'Europe, et de se joindre franchement à elle pour rétablir l'ordre et punir les coupables."

and I have since seen the Sultan, my interview with whom will be related separately.

I should be doing injustice, however, to His Imperial Majesty and to Aali Pasha, and indeed I may say to every Turk I have seen, if I did not say that the horror they have expressed and felt at the accounts that have reached us has been most profound; and if any hesitation is felt by the circumstance as to the extent which should be given to the employment of European troops, I believe it is solely guided by his apprehensions as to the effect which the occupation of certain cities, especially Damascus, might have on the Mussulman mind. He speaks strongly against the conduct of the Turkish Authorities and Commanders, but says they will have to answer for it. I have heard him add, that if but 50 Mussulman soldiers had died defending order, he would have been satisfied that the Turkish name would have been defended from shame.

I have, &c.

(Signed) H. L. BULWER.

No. 67.

Sir H. Bulwer to Lord J. Russell.—(Received August 3.)

(No. 447.)

My Lord,

Therapia, July 25, 1860.

THE latest news from Syria is in an account of Mr. Brant, who had escaped wholly uninjured up to the 10th. He described the riot to have originated owing to some boys who had been assaulting Christians, having been arrested and ordered to sweep the streets by the Pasha.

He says the Christian quarter had been attacked, and that the town was in flames; but in contradiction to M. Lanusse, he observes that many murders had not been committed. The Druses were, however, entering the town, and we hear from Beyrout that letters dated from Damascus to the 13th speak of insurrection and murder still continuing. The Marquis de Lavalette says that M. de Lanusse expected on the 12th Abdel Kader's residence to be attacked and every one in it murdered, but it does not appear that this has yet taken place.

Many Christians have been sheltered in Mussulman houses, and there are a very large number with the Pasha; but this officer has evidently behaved without either courage or judgment, and it is the general belief that any decision on his part might in the first instance have prevented matters getting worse.

It would seem that he was at the time on bad terms with the Government at home, having offered his resignation when some troops had been withdrawn from him, and this resignation having been accepted.

Fears appear to be entertained at Beyrout for Aleppo, but nothing decisive is here known as to the fate of this place.

I cannot but think, after turning over the matter considerably and looking at it in every point of view, that the decision of sending the Commission and the European force to Syria are both right measures, even if some bad consequences should be provoked by them.

The thing will be to limit as much as possible the chances of such consequences. This can be done in the best way by the choice of suitable Commanders with suitable instructions.

I have, &c.

(Signed) H. L. BULWER.

No. 68.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received August 3.)

(No. 1,020. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Paris, August 2, 1860.

M. THOUVENEL has read me a report which he has drawn up of the proceedings which took place at the Conference on the 30th ultimo. As it may

be shown your Lordship, and as it differs in some respects from that which I had the honour to lay before you in my despatch No. 1,006 of the 31st ultimo, I think it necessary to call your attention to the fact that I did not interfere in the discussion which took place on the Russian proposal until the Turkish Ambassador had protested against it in the most solemn manner. M. Thouvenel makes the first opposition to come from me, and states that I was supported by the Turkish Representative, the fact being the contrary, that the Turkish Ambassador opposed the Russian proposal as soon as it was made, and that I supported his objections. I told M. Thouvenel that his report was so far in error.

I must add further, that I confess to not having heard some of the arguments and observations which M. Thouvenel describes himself as having made; but this is not of much consequence, as he no doubt truly represents his sentiments. There are also omissions in his report, which a reference to mine will correct.

I have, &c.

(Signed) COWLEY.

No. 69.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received August 3.)

(No. 1,026.)

My Lord,

Paris, August 2, 1860.

LORD DUFFERIN arrived in Paris the night before last, and M. Thouvenel having been too much occupied to enable him to receive his Lordship yesterday, I took him to the Foreign Department this morning. M. Thouvenel, on learning that Lord Dufferin was to receive his instructions from Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, said that he feared that great confusion might arise if Her Majesty's Government followed this course. The proposal which his Excellency had made, and which he had understood Her Majesty's Government to have accepted, was, that a Mixed Commission should be sent to Syria, and that the Commissioners in concert with the Commissioner of the Porte should examine into the causes of the late outbreak, should see that the authors and abettors in the massacres were properly punished, and should inquire what alterations and modifications of the arrangement of 1845 could be introduced, so as to prevent a recurrence of the late horrible drama, and ensure a better administration of government in Syria. But to attain these objects his Excellency considered that the Five Powers must agree on the general nature of the instructions to be furnished to their Commissioners, and there would be no unity in the action of the latter, and without unity of action no good results could be obtained. He had himself intended that the French Commissioner should go direct from hence to Syria, and that his instructions should have emanated from himself, but if Her Majesty's Government preferred that the instructions should proceed from Constantinople, then he thought that it would be desirable that they should be drawn up in a Conference of the Representatives of the Five Powers, so that each Commissioner should receive identic directions, for, he repeated, there would otherwise be nothing but discordant opinions. But in order that the Representatives at Constantinople might clearly understand the objects proposed to be attained by the Commission, so that they might agree upon general instructions, it would be necessary that each Government should furnish its Representative with instructions previously concerted between them all, and until this had been done, no progress could be made at Constantinople. Identic instructions to the Commissioners was his object, whether they were drawn up at Constantinople or elsewhere.

It seemed to me that it would be as well that this question should be cleared up before Lord Dufferin's departure, and his Lordship expressing the same wish, and there being time to obtain your Lordship's decision, I addressed you a telegram to that effect this afternoon.

I have, &c.

(Signed) COWLEY.

Lord J. Russell to Earl Cowley.

(No. 768.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, August 3, 1860.

WITH reference to your Excellency's despatch No. 1,026 of the 2nd instant, I have to state to your Excellency that Lord Dufferin was sent to Paris with a view to learn the basis on which the Commission of Inquiry in Syria is to proceed.

Her Majesty's Government always intended that the instructions given by the Five Powers should be identical.

But it appears to Her Majesty's Government that it will be of no use to have an inquiry, if the results of the inquiry are to be determined beforehand.

It seems to Her Majesty's Government that the Representatives of the Five Powers at Constantinople should be desired to draw up in concert the instructions to be given to the Commissioners.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received August 4.)

(No. 1,028.)

My Lord,

Paris, August 3, 1860.

M. THOUVENEL informed me this morning that the Russian Government had authorized General Kisseleff to desist from the proposal which he had been instructed to make relative to the Christian populations of Turkey, and to agree to the Convention for the occupation of Syria by foreign troops without further difficulty, Prince Gortchakoff reserving to himself to treat the question diplomatically with the several Governments of the Great Powers.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received August 4.)

(No. 1,029.)

My Lord,

Paris, August 3, 1860.

WITH reference to your Lordship's telegram informing me that Lord Dufferin might prolong his stay at Paris, but that the nature of his duties should be fixed as soon as possible, I have the honour to state that I have had a further conversation with M. Thouvenel on this subject. His Excellency continues very unwilling to consent that the instructions for the Commissioners who are to proceed to Syria, should emanate from the Representatives of the Great Powers at Constantinople. He maintains that the character of the Commission which is intended to institute an inquiry on the part of Europe into the late massacres in Syria, would be altered, if the instructions to the members of it were not to be furnished directly by their different Governments. He considers that their duty should be, as I had the honour to inform your Lordship yesterday, to inquire into the cause of the late disturbances, to see that the guilty are punished, and to suggest modifications in the arrangement for the Lebanon of 1845, and measures for the future government of Syria. Simple instructions of this nature should, his Excellency contends, proceed from the Governments themselves. The report of the Commissioners should be made to their Governments, and this, in his Excellency's opinion, will be the proper moment for the interference of the Representatives at Constantinople, to obtain the ameliorations that may be considered necessary.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received August 4.)

(No. 1,032.)

My Lord,

Paris, August 3, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to inclose herewith, copies of two Protocols which were signed this afternoon at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, by the Representatives of Great Britain, Austria, France, Prussia, Russia and Turkey, the one sanctioning the French expedition to Syria, the other disclaiming all interested motives on the part of the Allies of the Porte in undertaking this expedition. But the latter recalls to the recollection of the Porte the promise made by the Sultan in 1856 to ameliorate the condition of his Christian subjects.

In consequence of the importance of the matters contained in them, I requested that these Protocols might be signed in sextuple. This will be done, when the originals destined for Her Majesty's Government shall be transmitted to your Lordship.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

Inclosure 1 in No. 73.

Protocol of a Conference held at Paris, August 3, 1860.

Présents les Représentants, &c.

SA Majesté Impériale le Sultan voulant arrêter, par des mesures promptes et efficaces, l'effusion du sang en Syrie, et témoigner de sa ferme résolution d'assurer l'ordre et la paix parmi les populations placées sous sa souveraineté, et leurs Majestés l'Empereur d'Autriche, l'Empereur des Français, la Reine du Royaume Uni de la Grande Bretagne et d'Irlande, Son Altesse Royale le Prince Régent de Prusse, et Sa Majesté l'Empereur de toutes les Russies, ayant offert leur co-opération active, que Sa Majesté le Sultan a acceptée, les Représentants de leurs dites Majestés et de Son Altesse Royale sont tombés d'accord sur les Articles suivants :—

ARTICLE I.

Un corps de troupes Européennes qui pourra être porté à 12,000 hommes, sera dirigé en Syrie pour contribuer au rétablissement de la tranquillité.

ARTICLE II.

Sa Majesté l'Empereur des Français consent à fournir immédiatement la moitié de ce corps de troupes. S'il devenait nécessaire d'élever son effectif au chiffre stipulé dans l'Article précédent, les Hautes Puissances s'entendraient sans retard avec la Porte, par la voie diplomatique ordinaire, sur la désignation de celles d'entre elles qui auraient à y pourvoir.

ARTICLE III.

Le Commandant-en-chef de l'expédition entrera, à son arrivée, en communication avec le Commissaire Extraordinaire de la Porte, afin de combiner toutes les mesures exigées par les circonstances et de prendre les positions qu'il y aura lieu d'occuper pour remplir l'objet du présent Acte.

ARTICLE IV.

Leurs Majestés, &c., &c., promettent d'entretenir sur les côtes de Syrie des forces navales suffisantes pour concourir au succès des efforts communs pour le maintien ou le rétablissement de la tranquillité sur le littoral de la Syrie.

ARTICLE V.

Les Hautes Parties, convaincues que ce délai sera suffisant pour atteindre le but de pacification qu'elles ont en vue, fixent à six mois la durée de l'occupation des troupes Européennes en Syrie.

ARTICLE VI.

La Sublime Porte s'engage à faciliter, autant qu'il dépendra d'elle, la subsistance et l'approvisionnement du corps expéditionnaire.

Il est entendu que les six Articles précédents seront textuellement convertis en une Convention qui recevra les signatures des Représentants soussignés, aussitôt qu'ils seront munis des pleins pouvoirs de leurs Souverains, mais que les stipulations de ce Protocole entreront immédiatement en vigueur.

M. le Chargé d'Affaires de Prusse toutefois fait observer que la distribution actuelle des bâtiments de guerre Prussiens peut ne pas permettre à son Gouvernement de co-opérer dès à présent à l'exécution de l'Article IV.

(Suivent les signatures.)

Inclosure 2 in No. 73.

Protocol of a Conference held at Paris, August 3, 1860.

LES Plénipotentiaires de désirant établir, conformément aux intentions de leurs Cours respectives, le véritable caractère du concours prêté à la Sublime Porte aux termes du Protocole signé aujourd'hui, les sentiments qui leur ont dicté les clauses de cet Acte, et leur entier désintéressement, déclarent de la manière la plus formelle que les Puissances Contractantes n'entendent poursuivre ni ne poursuivront dans l'exécution de leurs engagements, aucun avantage territorial, aucune influence exclusive, ni aucune concession touchant le commerce de leurs sujets, et qui ne pourrait être accordée aux sujets de toutes les autres nations.

Néanmoins ils ne peuvent s'empêcher, en rappelant ici les Actes émanés du Sultan dont l'Article IX du Traité du 30 Mai, 1856, a constaté la haute valeur, d'exprimer le prix que leurs Cours respectives attachent à ce que, conformément aux promesses solennelles de la Sublime Porte, il soit pris des mesures administratives sérieuses pour l'amélioration du sort des populations Chrétiennes de tout rite de l'Empire Ottoman.

Le Plénipotentiaire de la Sublime Porte prend acte de cette déclaration des Représentants des Hautes Puissances Contractantes, et se charge de la transmettre à sa Cour, en faisant observer que la Sublime Porte a employé et continue d'employer ses efforts dans le sens du vœu exprimé ci-dessus.

(Suivent les signatures.)

No. 74.

Mr. Fane to Lord J. Russell.—(Received August 6.)

(No. 10. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Vienna, August 2, 1860.

I CALLED upon Count Rechberg on Tuesday last, and his Excellency said that he was desirous of communicating to me the reasons which had induced him to approve the proposal of Russia to add a secret clause to the Convention for regulating the armed intervention of the Powers in the affairs of Syria. His Excellency described that clause in its original form as embodying a stipulation that, if disturbances occurred in the European Provinces of Turkey, an armed intervention should only take place on the same conditions as those laid down for the intervention in Syria. He was aware that Her Majesty's Government had objected to the addition of any such clause to the Convention, and as it was his earnest wish to pursue in this

question a common action with Great Britain he was desirous to explain clearly the motives which had led the Imperial Cabinet to give their support to the Russian proposal.

The danger, said his Excellency, which in his opinion had chiefly to be guarded against was an isolated intervention in the European Provinces of Turkey on the part of Russia. He thought that danger imminent, because Prince Gortchakoff, when he called together the Representatives of the Great Powers at St. Peterburgh to communicate to them his views on Turkish affairs, had plainly intimated that if the other Powers should not consent to join in energetic measures for the protection of the Christian subjects of the Porte, the Russian Government would be constrained by the force of public opinion in their country to interfere alone on behalf of their co-religionists.

This threat having been once thrown out, it behoved the other Powers to neglect no means to frustrate its execution, and to obviate the disastrous consequences to Turkey, and the embarrassments to Europe, which must ensue from such single action on the part of the Russian Government. Now, it appeared to Count Rechberg, that the clause which it was proposed to add to the Convention furnished a guarantee that no isolated intervention in European Turkey would be made by any individual Power, and it was on this account, and with the view of precluding the possibility of eventual action in Turkish affairs on the part of Russia, without concert with her Allies, that he had thought it prudent to consent to the insertion of the proposed clause in the Convention.

I replied, that Her Majesty's Government had considered the proposed clause inadmissible, chiefly on the ground that it would open the door to fresh interventions, and that they deemed it expedient to wait till the case for such intervention should arise before determining how it should be met. If regard for the public law of Europe and for existing obligations were not sufficient to deter Russia from the course of isolated action which his Excellency contemplated, the restraints upon her would not I thought be greatly increased by the clause proposed to be added to the Convention.

His Excellency said that, while Her Majesty's Government thought it expedient to wait until the hypothetical cases for further intervention arose, he deemed it prudent to anticipate them and to forestall the dissensions, or at least discussions, to which they would give rise; and he considered that any additional precaution, such as the proposed clause furnished, against isolated action on the part of any one Power, should not be neglected. His chief object, however, in giving me these explanations was to demonstrate to Her Majesty's Government that he had not separated himself from them on this part of the question without what he considered as a weighty reason.

I said that whatever might be the opinion of Her Majesty's Government on the policy of supporting the proposal of Russia, I was well assured that the explanations into which his Excellency had entered would be received in the same friendly spirit as that in which they had been offered.

Count Rechberg continued the conversation by saying that the Imperial Cabinet was extremely desirous to pursue a course identical with that of Her Majesty's Government upon the Syrian question, and this object had been carefully kept in view in framing the instructions sent to Prince Metternich. He had been generally instructed to act in concert with his British and Prussian colleagues, and specially instructed to support the protocol proposed by your Lordship.

In entering upon the general bearings of the question, Count Rechberg said that he regretted that a French army was to proceed alone to Syria, and he would have been glad that it should be accompanied by some of Her Majesty's troops. He believed that the intention of the French Government was to proceed with the intervention in every case, and that they would suffer no reports of a reconciliation between the hostile races and sects, and of the consequent re-establishment of tranquillity, to interfere with their settled purpose to occupy Syria. He thought they would establish a strong military position in that country, and that it would be a work of immense difficulty to induce them to quit it. Their plan, he apprehended, was to invest Abd-el-Kader with vice-regal authority, and to place the Government of the country in his hands, a measure which would tend materially to weaken and discredit the Porte.

Her Majesty's Government, I said, considered the intervention was justified by the ferocity of the Druses, and the apathy of the Turkish Authorities; but, while the gravity of the case appeared to render an armed interference necessary, such a measure had been sanctioned by them with great reluctance. They were, moreover, of opinion that intervention should only be undertaken when the necessity for it was clearly proved, and that it should cease as soon as such necessity no longer existed. The objections to a prolonged occupation, I observed, had not escaped Her Majesty's Government, and with a view of averting it they desired that the Convention should provide for the evacuation of Syria by the foreign troops at the expiration of a term of six months. Although Her Majesty's Government, I said, did not propose to employ the Queen's land forces in the effort to restore order in Syria, they had determined to send a squadron to the coast, and to vest in the Admiral the power to land Marines if necessary. They had been of opinion that Austria might, if necessary, send some troops to Aleppo.

"That," replied his Excellency, "we cannot do. We require all our troops for the defence of Venetia in case it should be attacked."

His Excellency closed the conversation by observing that he was glad to conclude from what I had said that your Lordship viewed this question in the same grave light in which he himself regarded it, and he trusted and believed that the opinions of the two Governments upon Syrian Affairs would prove to be identical on all essential points.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JULIAN FANE.

P. S.—Since writing the above I have again seen Count Rechberg, who informs me that he has learnt by telegraph that the Russian Government had consented to modify the clause which they propose adding to the Convention. The modification, his Excellency observed, omitted that portion of the original clause to which he had directed my special attention, and which had rendered it valuable in his opinion for the reason which he had stated to me. The clause in its modified form appeared to him to give expression to vague generalities, and to be therefore far less satisfactory than the stipulation originally proposed, which would have proved an effective check upon the single action of any one of the Powers in favour of the Christians subjects of the Porte.

Count Rechberg had also learnt that it had been proposed to the Russian Government that they should withdraw their clause altogether, so as not to mix up questions relating to the European Provinces of Turkey with those which appertained to affairs in the East, but he had not yet been informed of the reply received from St. Petersburg.

J. F.

No. 75.

Lord Bloomfield to Lord J. Russell.—(Received August 6.)

(No. 288.)

My Lord,

Berlin, August 4, 1860.

BARON SCHLEINITZ has informed me that a Protocol was signed yesterday at Paris in anticipation of the proposed Convention authorizing a military intervention, and the temporary occupation of Syria by forces of the Allied Powers, and he said that a portion of the troops to be sent by the French Government would in consequence be enabled to depart for the East without delay.

With reference to the introduction in the Convention of the proposed Russian Article, I told his Excellency that Her Majesty's Government had objected to it for two reasons, which I trusted he would duly appreciate, and I then read to him confidentially your Lordship's despatch No. 146 of the 2nd instant.

Baron Schleinitz made no observation until I got to the passage in which it was stated that Her Majesty's Government think it unwise to promise or exact a promise of a new organization of Turkey, without specifying what that organization is to be, and he said that he was quite of the opinion of Her

Majesty's Government that nothing in this respect should be undertaken without being taken into the fullest consideration by the Great Powers.

I have, &c.
(Signed) BLOOMFIELD.

No. 76.

Lord J. Russell to Mr. Erskine.

(No. 34.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, August 8, 1860.

I HAVE received your despatch No. 53 of the 27th ultimo, in which you report the language made use of by Prince Gortchakoff respecting foreign intervention in Syria, and the views of Russia with regard to the protection to be afforded generally to Christian subjects of the Porte; and with reference to the desire expressed by his Excellency to speak to you again upon the subject, I have to instruct you to listen to any observations which Prince Gortchakoff may wish to make to you, and to report the same to me.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 77.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received August 9.)

(No. 1,049.)

My Lord,

Paris, August 7, 1860.

AS the French troops which are to be sent to Syria are to act in the name of Europe, and as the object which the expedition is to attain is very clearly defined in the protocol signed at Paris on the 3rd instant, I have thought it necessary to caution M. Thouvenel against the employment of French troops for any other purpose. I have been induced to do this because rumours had reached me that among the instructions furnished by General Beaufort was one enjoining him to levy a contribution on the town of Damascus, and another to punish the guilty in the late massacres. I have told M. Thouvenel, therefore, that, as General Beaufort will be acting in virtue of a Protocol signed by the Great Powers with the Porte, those Powers should be furnished with copies of the instructions given to the General. M. Thouvenel informed me this afternoon that he had applied to the Ministry of War for this document, and that as soon as he should be in possession of it, copies should be furnished to the different Governments interested. In the meantime he could tell me that the Emperor's last words to General Beaufort were, that His Majesty would be much disappointed if the expedition were not back in France within three months.

M. Thouvenel, however, having expressed himself in the course of this conversation to the effect that indemnities had been demanded at Jeddah for the massacres committed there, and that he considered that the same course should be pursued at Damascus, I observed that, according to his own proposal, the whole question was to be inquired into by a Mixed Commission, and to them, therefore, should be left the duty of making proposals of this or any other nature. For instance, I said, the Commission could alone determine on which side the fray had originally commenced. If, as many suppose, the Maronites had been the original aggressors, it might not excuse the atrocities committed by the Druses, but it would materially alter the question of indemnity, nor could it be intended that the town of Damascus should pay for excesses committed in the Lebanon. The Porte should be left in the first instance as Sovereign to do what was right, and the Commissioners should not interfere unless the Authorities sent by the Porte did not do their duty.

I made a further observation to M. Thouvenel, which I was happy to see that he responded to, and of which, if necessary, advantage may be hereafter taken by Her Majesty's Government, namely, that the institution of the Commission would facilitate the return of the expedition, for that as soon as

tranquillity should be restored, and the moral effect which the French Government hoped from the presence of European troops in Syria should be obtained, there would be a fair and valid reason for withdrawing the troops and leaving further proceedings in the hands of the Commissioners. M. Thouvenel said that such was also his opinion. He considered that the Commission would be a great assistance to the French Government to cover the withdrawal of their troops, for he looked to no other than a moral effect, as a safeguard for the future, from the presence of the expedition which had been sent.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

No. 78.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received August 9.)

(No. 1,050.)

My Lord,

Paris, August 7, 1860.

M. THOUVENEL having been out of town, I could not see his Excellency until this afternoon on the subject of your Lordship's despatches Nos. 768 and 772 of the 3rd and 4th instants, relative to the instructions to be given to the Commissioners about to proceed to Syria. I read the substance of those despatches to him. A lengthened conversation ensued, during which M. Thouvenel repeated the observations which he had before made to me on this subject; that if the Commission was to act upon instructions emanating from Constantinople it would not carry with it the same weight as a Commission acting upon identic instructions coming direct from the several Governments furnishing Commissioners; and that he could see no difficulty in framing simple instructions on which the Commissioners could act. He recapitulated the three points to which the instructions should refer: namely, to investigate the origin and cause of the late outbreak and massacres; to see that the guilty were punished; to inquire into and advise on the best means of preventing a renewal of the late bloody scenes, and of ameliorating the Government of Syria. Having done this the Commissioners should address a collective report to their respective Governments. It would be impossible for the Representatives at Constantinople to give other than general instructions of this nature, and by a reference there much time would be lost. However, those Governments who liked to send their Commissioners by way of Constantinople could do so, but a day should be fixed on which all the Commissioners should meet in Syria, and put themselves in communication with the Porte's Commissioner Extraordinary.

As I could make no impression on M. Thouvenel, I requested him to lose no time in sending for your Lordship's consideration a project of instructions such as he proposed furnishing to the French Commissioner. He promised to do so by to-night's, and at latest by to-morrow's mail.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

No. 79.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received August 9.)

(No. 1,053.)

My Lord,

Paris, August 8, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to inclose, extracted from the "Moniteur," the copy of an allocution addressed by the Emperor at Chalons to such of the troops as are about to depart from thence to form part of the expedition to Syria.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

Inclosure in No. 79.

Extract from the "Moniteur" of August 8, 1860.

Camp de Chalons, le 7 Août, 1 h. 25 m. soir.

CE matin, à dix heures, l'Empereur a passé la revue de départ du 5ème Régiment de Ligne, Colonel Caubert; du 13ème Régiment, Colonel Darricau, et du 1er Escadron du 1er des Hussards, Capitaine Stockly.

Les troupes étaient en tenue de campagne et présentaient l'aspect le plus martial.

Avant le défilé, Sa Majesté a distribué quelques croix et médailles; les troupes étant formées en carré, les drapeaux au centre, l'Empereur a prononcé l'allocution suivante:—

"Soldats,

"Vous partez pour la Syrie et la France salue avec bonheur une expédition qui n'a qu'un but, celui de faire triompher les droits de la justice et de l'humanité.

"Vous n'allez pas, en effet, faire la guerre à une Puissance quelconque, mais vous allez aider le Sultan à faire rentrer dans l'obéissance des sujets aveuglés par un fanatisme d'un autre siècle.

"Sur cette terre lointaine, riche en grands souvenirs, vous ferez votre devoir et vous vous montrerez les dignes enfans de ces héros qui ont porté glorieusement dans ce pays la bannière du Christ.

"Vous ne partez pas en grand nombre, mais votre courage et votre prestige y suppléeront, car partout aujourd'hui où l'on voit passer le drapeau de la France les nations savent qu'il y a une grande cause qui le précède, un grand peuple qui le suit."

Après ces paroles a eu lieu le défilé aux cris enthousiastes de "Vive l'Empereur!"

No. 80.

Lord J. Russell to Earl Cowley.

(No. 789.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, August 9, 1860.

I HAVE seen M. Jaucourt, and he has read to me the despatch of M. Thouvenel respecting the instructions to the Commissioners on the affairs of Syria.

Her Majesty's Government entirely agree with that of France respecting the objects of the Commission which are thus defined by M. Thouvenel:—

"Elle doit consister à rechercher les circonstances qui ont amené les derniers conflits, à déterminer la part de responsabilité des chefs de l'insurrection et des agents de l'administration locale, ainsi que les réparations dues aux victimes, et enfin à étudier, pour les soumettre à l'approbation des Gouvernements et de la Porte, les dispositions qui pourraient être adoptées pour conjurer de nouveaux malheurs."

As the instructions will contain little more than a direction to attend to these objects, it appears to Her Majesty's Government to be of little importance whether they should emanate from the Five Powers themselves or their Representatives at Constantinople.

I therefore readily accede to the wish of M. Thouvenel. What appears to Her Majesty's Government of the greatest importance is, that as the Commissioners will represent the Porte, together with the Five Powers, they should be named, and begin their operations as soon as possible.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

Lord Dufferin to Lord J. Russell.—(Received August 9.)

(No. 2.)

My Lord,

Paris, August 8, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that yesterday evening I had a conversation with M. de Thouvenel on the subject of the Syrian Commission, from which I gathered that his Excellency's ideas in regard to its functions correspond pretty accurately with those of your Lordship.

On my returning, however, to inquire of his Excellency what were the relations in which it was intended the Commission should stand to the General commanding the French Army, his Excellency rather drily replied, "That no relations at all would exist between the General and the Commission."

To this observation I made no answer, as I felt it to be a point not within my province to discuss.

As, however, I conclude it is not the intention of Her Majesty's Government that French martial law should too completely eclipse the authority of the Sultan, or that the contemplated intervention should lose its European character, I should be glad to receive from your Lordship instructions as to the position which Her Majesty's Government wish the Commission should hold in respect to the French Commander-in-chief.

Should it be considered desirable that the French General should act to any extent in concert with the Commission, whether in their co-operation with the Turkish Authorities in punishing delinquents, or in reorganizing the administration of the province, such concert perhaps would be best secured by conformable instructions being sent to him by his own Government.

I have, &c.

(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Lord J. Russell to Lord Dufferin.

My Lord,

Foreign Office, August 9, 1860.

I HAVE received your Lordship's despatch No. 2 of the 8th instant, inquiring what position the European Commission should hold with respect to the Commander-in-chief of the French forces in Syria; and I have to state to you in reply, that Her Majesty's Government do not apprehend that any special instructions will be requisite on this point, as the duties of the Commissioners and of the Commander will be quite distinct.

I may observe, however, that if communication should at any time be considered necessary from the Commission to the French General, such communication should be made by the Commissioners collectively, and not by any one Commissioner individually.

I am, &c.

(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

Lord J. Russell to Consul Brant.

(No. 1.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, August 10, 1860.

WITH reference to your despatch No. 8 of the 16th ultimo, detailing the plunder, massacres, and conflagrations which took place in the Christian quarter of Damascus, between the 9th and the 15th of July, and the exertions of the Algerines under Ab-del-Kader, in saving several hundreds from the ruins, I have to instruct you to convey to his Highness the Emir Abd-el-Kader, in suitable terms, the thanks of Her Majesty's Government for his noble exertions on that occasion in defence of the lives of the Christians.

I am, &c.

(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

Consul-General Moore to Lord J. Russell.—(Received August 10.)

(No. 23.)

My Lord,

Beyrout, July 21, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to inclose copy of my despatch of this date to his Excellency Sir Henry Bulwer relative to the mission of Fuad Pasha to Syria, and the state of the country.

I have, &c.

(Signed) N. MOORE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 84.

Consul-General Moore to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, July 21, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to inclose copy of my despatch of the 18th instant to Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, with its inclosures.

I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your Excellency's letter of the 12th instant, by Fuad Pasha, relative to his Excellency's mission to Syria, and to say, that I will be entirely guided by the instructions it contains.

The Imperial Firman appointing Fuad Pasha the Porte's Commissioner, and conferring on him extraordinary powers, has been publicly read with the usual ceremonies, and his Excellency has issued a proclamation to the people of Syria. The Pasha has just sent me several printed copies of both documents. I beg to inclose one of each in the original Arabic for the present, and will transmit translations as soon as practicable.

I paid a second visit to Fuad Pasha yesterday, who received me with the same cordiality as before. I gave his Excellency such information as I deemed it desirable he should possess. In reference to what I said respecting the conduct of the Turkish officers and troops, who, according to my information, had encouraged the Druses to commit atrocities, and even menaced them should they not act in the manner prescribed, he said that he was open to receive any disclosures that might be made by Druses, in that or any other sense, under any proper conditions they chose, and, if necessary, through my medium. His Excellency informed me that he had taken measures for the subsistence and relief of the sufferers of Deir-el-Kamar; and that he had ordered the arrest, with a view to trial and condign punishment, of certain military officers, whom I have ascertained to be the Lieutenant-Colonel and two Majors who commanded at Deir-el-Kamar; that he would send at once Ahmet Pasha to Constantinople to answer for his conduct there; and that he would himself leave for Damascus in three or four days, make a short stay there, and then take up his quarters at some spot between that city and Beyrout.

I have already reported that Fuad Pasha had sent Khoorshid Pasha to Latakia. This step has excited surprise and remark; and it is inferred that the Pasha will not return to this place, but go on to Constantinople.

I regret to state, that by Mr. Abela's reports, the neighbourhood of Sidon still continues to be the scene of Druse acts of violence and aggression, notwithstanding the conclusion of peace. I purpose to-day to bring this circumstance to the knowledge of the Porte's Commissioner, as well as the fact that the inhabitants of Christian villages close to Beyrout do not venture to return to their places to attend to their olive plantations, their sole remaining property, as the few who had done so have met with molestation and insult at the hands of the Druses.

I have accounts from Mr. Brant up to the 9th instant; comparative quiet continued to prevail; but no Christian could show himself out of doors without being assailed with opprobrious language and personal insult.

From Aleppo we have no intelligence as yet.

Captain Paynter, at my recommendation, despatched the "Mohawk" to Jaffa on the 18th, in consequence of the urgent request of Mr. Consul Kayat for a ship of war, on account of the demeanour and language of the

Mahometans. The "Mohawk" was to call at the intermediate ports on her way back. Captain Howard's orders were to return forthwith, unless circumstances prevented his doing so. As up to this date he has not returned, I feel some anxiety in regard to the delay.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. MOORE.

Inclosure 2 in No. 84.

Imperial Firman.

(Translation.)

TO the Honourable Magnate and Excellent Counsellor, the regulator of the world and director of public affairs with sagacity, and the accomplisher of the affairs of the people with a correct and right understanding, the establisher of authority and prosperity, the supporter of the foundations of happiness and dignity, who art surrounded by the various favours of the most High King, the greatest agent of our Sublime Government, and the greatest Counsellor of our high Royalty, intrusted with the Foreign Affairs of our august Government; chosen by our Majesty to be independent in the Extraordinary Commission for the Affairs of Syria, the bearer of our mark of the Mejidieh, the obtainer worthily of the honour of the decoration of your Imperial distinction, and of the military service of the first class; the wise Vizir, Mohammed Fuad Pasha, may God the most high preserve his dignity. As soon as thou receivest this our Imperial order, let it be known by thee.

Thou who art an energetic and distinguished Vizir, art aware fully of the civil war which has broken out between the Maronites and the Druses inhabiting Mount Lebanon in Syria. As soon as the news of the hostilities and civil war raging between them reached us, we were very much displeased out of compassion for the people; we, in our august power, look only with compassion upon our subjects notwithstanding their differences of religion, so that they all may enjoy security, comfort, happiness, and tranquillity, and that no party should molest another or trespass upon its rights in any way. This is our greatest aim and earnest desire.

As to the tyrannical and treacherous proceedings which have disturbed Mount Lebanon, it is in every respect contrary to our wishes and in contravention to the requirements of our justice. We, therefore, entrust thee, having full confidence in thy sagacity and wisdom, to take charge of this matter, and authorize thee, being fully satisfied of the prudence for which thou hast been distinguished in the world, to act independently in this matter, in order that thou mayest hasten to extinguish the fire of this excitement, and utterly to destroy those persons who gave birth to this disturbance, not sparing any of them, nor allowing to escape the perpetrators of these wicked acts, who have shed maliciously the blood of mankind. Now, O excellent Vizir, the unique amongst thy compeers, who art adorned with the above-mentioned honourable qualities, dignified and venerated among the men of our victorious kingdom, thou, even thou art the person in whom our Majesty has put its confidence and trust, that thou mayest be on our part independent in this important matter free to order and to act. And we have sent to those parts a numerous army which will be subject to thy orders, to be despatched wherever thy prudence, judgment, and energy should deem necessary. Thou wilt, please God, immediately leave this place for that country, and as soon as thou reachest that land, all civil and military Vizirs will be subordinate to thee. They will abide by thy advice and submit to thy instructions in whatever thou deemest necessary for exterminating as soon as possible the traces of this civil war between the Maronites and the Druses. Exhaust every effort for restoring security and tranquillity, which are essential to the happiness of all men. Punish those who have ventured to shed the blood of human beings, in conformity to the just rules of our criminal code, for rebuke and chastisement. Hasten, O hasten to exterminate the traces of this dreadful disaster, acting with the wisdom and energy in which thou hast been signalised. Owing to thy wisdom and faithfulness in the discharge of the duties of thy office, and to the hope of thy doing

thy utmost in carrying out thy mission. We have entrusted thee with the civil and military power in managing this affair. In view of which, these orders have been issued to thee from our Imperial Court, entrusting thee with the execution of this work, and permitting thee to depart, in order that thou mayest be directed and guided by them.

Depend on Our Royal Signet.

Dated the last of Zé-el-Hagi 1276 (July 1860).

Inclosure 3 in No. 84.

(Translation.)

Proclamation.

People of Syria!

THE civil war which has just broken out in Mount Lebanon between the Maronites and Druses, and the wicked shedding of blood resulting from it, have excited the indignation and the regrets of His Majesty our Sultan, his mercy and justice extending to all his subjects equally and without distinction.

It is quite opposed to His Majesty's pleasure that any person or party should, for any reason, or in any way, molest or transgress the rights of another. Whoever, therefore, ventures to molest a subject of the Porte is to be considered as a rebel against the Government. Hence, after investigating the outrages committed by the inhabitants of the Lebanon, every trace of hostility and dissension shall be removed.

I have come with an Imperial, independent, and extraordinary Commission to punish the perpetrators of these crimes, having with me Royal troops. The nature of my Commission will be known from the provisions of the High Firman addressed to me, and from which all the world will know the justice of our Sultan, who gives refuge to the oppressed, and inflicts punishment on the oppressors.

I will carry out this my Commission with perfect uprightness. Let all here be at peace.

As to those families who were driven out of their houses and homes, I will charge myself with their relief, and will see that they are provided with the means of living, thus manifesting to them the Imperial justice and compassion in every way.

Let hostilities cease altogether. From this and henceforth, the Imperial troops under our command will attack any transgressing party that begins hostilities, and we punish at once those persons who molest others. This Commission, while contemplating a cessation of all dissensions, is intended also to be an extraordinary means for hearing all cases of a criminal character affecting individuals. Let every one, therefore, great or small, boldly bring before us his grievances, and we shall not fail to hear them.

Be it known to all!

No. 85.

The Count de Jaucourt to Lord J. Russell.—(Received August 10.)

My Lord,

Albert-Gate House, 9 Août, 1860.

SUIVANT le désir que vous avez bien voulu m'en exprimer ce matin, j'ai l'honneur de vous adresser ci-joint copie de la dépêche de M. Thouvenel, et du projet d'instructions au Général de Beaufort d'Hautpoul.

Agréé, &c.
(Signé) F. DE JAUCOURT.

Inclosure 1 in No. 85.

M. Thouvenel to Count Persigny.

M. le Comte,

Paris, le 8 Août, 1860.

M. L'AMBASSADEUR d'Angleterre m'a annoncé la nomination de Lord Dufferin en qualité de Commissaire du Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Britannique en Syrie. M. le Comte Cowley m'a également fait savoir, en me le présentant, que Lord Dufferin part après demain pour Constantinople et qu'il doit recevoir ses instructions de Sir H. Bulwer. Je n'ai point appris jusqu'à présent que les autres Puissances aient désigné de leur côté des Commissaires, et j'attends qu'un accord se soit établi entre elles à cet égard pour soumettre le choix que j'aurai à faire à l'approbation de l'Empereur.

Vous vous rappelez, M. le Comte, l'idée que le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté se forme de la tâche de la Commission, et comment je la définissais dans ma dépêche du 16 Juillet. Elle doit consister, vous disais-je, à rechercher les circonstances qui ont amené les derniers conflits, à déterminer la part de responsabilité des chefs de l'insurrection et des agents de l'administration locale, ainsi que les réparations dues aux victimes, et enfin à étudier, pour les soumettre à l'approbation des Gouvernements et de la Porte, les dispositions qui pourraient être adoptées pour conjurer de nouveaux malheurs. Il me semble que, pour se trouver investis de toute l'autorité nécessaire à l'accomplissement de cette mission, les Commissaires devraient tenir leurs instructions comme leur mandat des Gouvernements eux-mêmes, et continuer de recevoir leurs instructions des Cabinets tout en correspondant avec les Ambassadeurs à Constantinople dont ils auraient à prendre les avis. Je ne vois pas, d'ailleurs, qu'en traçant ces instructions il y eût lieu d'entrer dans les détails; il suffirait de poser quelques principes sur lesquels les Gouvernements se concerteraient et dont l'application serait remise aux Commissaires. Pénétrer l'origine et les causes des derniers événements, se livrer, d'accord avec le Commissaire Extraordinaire de la Porte, à une enquête ayant pour objet de punir les coupables, et, autant que possible, d'accorder aux familles qui ont particulièrement souffert les réparations matérielles des pertes qu'elles ont subies, examiner et suggérer dans un rapport collectif les modifications que comporterait l'organisation administrative de la Montagne telle qu'elle découle des arrangements de 1842 et de 1845, telles sont, à mon avis, comme je le disais dans notre première communication aux Cabinets, les données essentielles du programme que la Commission serait chargée de réaliser. J'aurais besoin, M. le Comte, de savoir si le Principal Secrétaire d'Etat partage cette manière de voir et s'il s'est placé dans cet ordre d'idées en envoyant Lord Dufferin en Syrie. Il est d'ailleurs indispensable que les Puissances s'entendent préalablement sur ce point, et Lord John Russell jugera sans doute opportun de faire connaître aux autres Cours l'opinion du Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Britannique à ce sujet, ainsi que sur la date à laquelle les Commissaires devraient être réunis à Beyrouth.

Afin de mettre M. le Ministre de la Guerre en mesure de préciser, dans les instructions qu'il avait à donner à M. le Général de Beaufort, l'objet de la mission du Commandant-en-chef de nos troupes, j'ai adressé à M. l'Amiral Hamelin, chargé de l'interim de ce Département, la lettre dont vous trouverez la copie ci-jointe.

Agréé, &c.
(Signé) THOUVENEL.

(Translation.)

M. le Comte,

Paris, August 8, 1860.

THE English Ambassador has informed me of the appointment of Lord Dufferin as Commissioner of the Government of Her Britannic Majesty in Syria. Lord Cowley has also acquainted me, in presenting him to me, that Lord Dufferin starts the day after to-morrow for Constantinople, and that he is to receive his instructions from Sir H. Bulwer. I have not learnt as yet that the other Powers have on their part named Commissioners, and I am waiting until an agreement may be established among them on this subject in order to

submit to the approbation of the Emperor the choice which I shall have to make.

You remember, M. le Comte, the idea which His Majesty's Government entertains of the task of the Commission, and how I defined it in my despatch of the 16th July. It should consist, I told you, in investigating the circumstances which have led to the late conflicts, in determining the share of responsibility of the chiefs of the insurrection, and of the agents of the local administration, as well as the compensation due to the victims, and finally to consider, in order to submit them to the approval of the Governments and of the Porte, the measures which might be adopted to avert fresh evils. It appears to me that, in order that they may find themselves invested with all the authority necessary to the accomplishment of their mission, the Commissioners should hold their instructions like their authority from the Governments themselves, and continue to receive their instructions from the Cabinets, corresponding at the same time with the Ambassadors at Constantinople whose advice they will have to take. Further, I do not see that in laying down these instructions there would be occasion to enter into details; it would suffice to lay down certain principles upon which the Governments will come to an understanding and the application of which will be entrusted to the Commissioners. To penetrate the origin and the causes of the late events, to devote themselves, in concert with the Extraordinary Commissioner of the Porte, to an inquiry having for its object to punish the guilty, and, as far as possible, to grant to the families which have especially suffered, material compensation for the losses which they have experienced, to examine and suggest in a collective report the modifications which would be admissible in the administrative organisation of the Mountain as it results from the arrangements of 1842 and of 1845;—such are, in my opinion, as I said in our first communication to the Cabinets, the essential conditions of the programme which the Commission will be charged to carry out.

I should wish to know, M. le Comte, if the Principal Secretary of State shares these views, and if it was with these intentions that he sent Lord Dufferin to Syria. It is moreover indispensable that the Powers should come to a previous arrangement upon this point, and Lord John Russell will no doubt consider it opportune to make known to the other Courts the opinion of the Government of Her Britannic Majesty upon this subject, as well as upon the date when the Commissioners should be assembled at Beyrouth.

With a view to place the Minister of War in a position to set forth in the instructions he had to give to General de Beaufort the object of the mission of the Commander-in-chief of our troops, I have addressed to Admiral Hamelin, temporarily in charge of that Department, the letter of which you will find a copy annexed.

Receive, &c.
(Signed) THOUVENEL.

Inclosure 2 in No. 85.

M. Thouvenel to Admiral Hamelin, Minister of War ad interim.

M. l'Amiral et cher Collègue,

Paris, le 4 Août, 1860.

CONFORMEMENT aux ordres de l'Empereur j'ai signé hier avec les Représentants des Grandes Puissances et M. l'Ambassadeur de Turquie le Protocole dont j'ai l'honneur de vous envoyer ci-joint la copie. Cet acte détermine le caractère et l'étendue du concours effectif prêté à la Turquie, en vue de mettre rapidement un terme aux désordres dont la Syrie est le théâtre. En indiquant le but que les Cabinets se proposent d'atteindre, il consacre leur accord et établit qu'ils interviennent à titre collectif et au nom de l'Europe après s'en être entendus avec la Porte, à laquelle appartient en premier lieu le devoir d'aviser. La nature de cet arrangement doit servir de règle au Commandant-en-chef de nos troupes, et votre Excellence jugera sans doute nécessaire d'en tenir compte dans les instructions qu'elle aura à remettre à M. le Général de Beaufort d'Hautpoul.

L'objet de la mission de cet Officier Général et des Commandants des forces

navales des Puissances réunies sur les côtes de Syrie, est de concourir à arrêter, par des mesures promptes et énergiques, l'effusion du sang, et à seconder la répression des attentats commis sur les Chrétiens, et qui ne sauraient rester impunis. L'Article III du Protocole stipule qu'à cet effet il devra, à son arrivée en Syrie, entrer en communication avec le Commissaire de la Porte. Cette clause était commandée par la situation même des choses; l'accord des Puissances devait se retrouver dans la participation de leurs Agents appelés à contribuer au résultat qu'elles ont résolu de poursuivre. L'Envoyé du Sultan et M. le Général de Beaufort auront donc à réunir leurs efforts communs en combinant l'action de nos troupes avec les pleins pouvoirs dont le Commissaire Ottoman a été muni, et qui lui donnent le droit de rendre et de faire exécuter les décisions exigées par les circonstances. M. le Général de Beaufort toutefois conserve une entière liberté d'appréciation pour tout ce qui concerne l'honneur de notre drapeau et la sûreté de notre corps expéditionnaire. A cet égard il demeure libre, en s'en expliquant cependant avec le Représentant du Gouvernement Turc, d'adopter les mesures et d'occuper les positions qu'il jugera utile de prendre.

J'invite l'Ambassadeur de Sa Majesté à Constantinople et nos Consuls à Beyrouth et à Damas à seconder de tous les moyens en leur pouvoir l'accomplissement de la mission confiée à cet Officier Général.

Agréer, &c.
(Signé) THOUVENEL.

(Translation.)

M. l'Amiral et cher Collègue,

Paris, August 4, 1860.

IN conformity with the orders of the Emperor I signed yesterday with the Representatives of the Great Powers and the Ambassador of Turkey the Protocol of which I have the honour to send you the accompanying copy. This act determines the character and extent of the effective assistance afforded to Turkey, with a view quickly to put an end to the disorders of which Syria is the theatre.

Whilst pointing out the object which the Cabinets propose to attain, it sanctions their agreement, and establishes the fact that they interpose collectively, and in the name of Europe, after having come to an understanding to such effect with the Porte, to whom belongs in the first place the duty of originating the measures to be taken.

The nature of this arrangement will serve as a rule to the Commander-in-chief of our troops; and your Excellency will no doubt deem it necessary to consider this in the instructions which you will have to address to General Beaufort d'Hautpoul.

The object of the mission of this General and of the Commanders of the naval forces of the Powers assembled on the coasts of Syria, is to assist in stopping, by prompt and energetic measures, the effusion of blood, and in putting an end to the outrages committed against the Christians, which cannot remain unpunished.

Article III of the Protocol stipulates that, to this end, he shall, upon his arrival in Syria, enter into communication with the Commissioner of the Porte. This clause was rendered necessary by the very situation of things; the harmony between the Powers was to reappear in the participation of their Agents called upon to contribute to the attainment of the object which they have resolved to pursue. The Sultan's Envoy and General de Beaufort will have then to unite their common efforts by combining the action of our forces with the full powers with which the Turkish Commissioner has been vested, and which gave him the right to make, and to cause to be executed, the decisions called for by circumstances.

General de Beaufort retains, however, entire liberty of judgment in every matter which concerns the honour of our flag and the safety of our expeditionary force.

In this respect, he remains free to adopt such measures and to occupy such positions as he may judge to be useful; being answerable for them, however, to the Representative of the Turkish Government.

I invite the Ambassador of His Majesty at Constantinople, and our

Consuls at Beyrouth and Damascus, to further, by every means in their power, the accomplishment of the undertaking entrusted to this general officer.

Receive, &c.
(Signed) THOUVENEL.

No. 86.

Lord J. Russell to Earl Cowley.

(No. 791.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, August 11, 1860.

HER Majesty's Government approve the language which you held to M. Thouvenel as reported in your despatch No. 1,049 of the 7th instant, upon the subject of the Commission about to proceed to Syria.

Since the receipt of your despatch Count Jaucourt has communicated to me a copy of a despatch from M. Thouvenel to Count de Persigny upon the same subject, a copy of which is inclosed herewith for your Excellency's information.*

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 87.

The Marquis d'Azeglio to Lord J. Russell.—(Received August 11.)

23, Park Lane, le 10 Août, 1860.

LE Marquis d'Azeglio présente ses compliments à son Excellence Lord John Russell et s'empresse de lui transmettre ci-joint copie de la dépêche de son Excellence le Comte de Cavour relative aux affaires de la Syrie dont il a eu l'honneur de lui donner lecture hier.

Le Marquis d'Azeglio prie son Excellence Lord John Russell d'agréer, &c.

Inclosure 1 in No. 87.

Count Cavour to the Marquis d'Azeglio.

M. le Marquis,

Turin, le 3 Août, 1860.

DES les premières complications soulevées par la situation des Chrétiens en Orient, le Gouvernement du Roi, invoquant les droits que lui confère le Traité de Paris de 1856, demanda à concourir aux négociations qui s'ouvriraient entre les Puissances qui avaient signé avec lui les stipulations réglant la position de la Turquie dans ses rapports avec l'Europe.

Lorsque, plus tard, les désordres et les massacres de Syrie vinrent jeter une profonde émotion en Europe, et faire sentir l'urgente nécessité de mesures propres à protéger efficacement la vie et le repos des malheureuses populations Chrétiennes de ces contrées, le Gouvernement du Roi, partageant les sympathies et les sollicitudes de tous les pays civilisés, réclama de nouveau la part qui lui revenait dans le concert qui s'établirait entre les signataires du Traité de Paris pour aviser aux moyens d'aider la Turquie à mettre un terme à ces excès et à ces désastres.

Fondée sur les dispositions d'un acte solennel, non moins que sur la protection que la Sardaigne doit à ses nombreux nationaux résidants en Syrie, et sur les graves intérêts de sa marine et de son commerce, la demande du Cabinet de Turin se recommandait naturellement à la considération des Puissances.

En effet, à Paris, comme à Londres et à St. Pétersbourg, nous avons rencontré dans la justice et dans la loyauté de ces Cours les meilleures dispositions à seconder nos desirs.

Nous avons appris toutefois que, pour faciliter une entente qui n'aurait su admettre de délai sans laisser les habitants Chrétiens de la Syrie en proie aux

* Inclosures in No. 85.

délices de leurs adversaires, les Puissances auraient adopté la résolution de procéder uniquement en vertu de l'arrangement conclu en 1845, auquel la Sardaigne n'a pas été partie.

Cette manière d'envisager la question en dehors des clauses du Traité signé à Paris le 30 Mars, 1856, doit, on le concevra, nous suggérer de graves objections.

Je sais qu'en 1845 les Cinq Grandes Puissances, voulant empêcher le retour des désordres qui avaient ensanglanté la Syrie, étaient convenues avec la Porte d'assurer, par certaines mesures d'administration intérieure, le repos et la tranquillité de ces malheureuses contrées.

Les terribles péripéties dont l'annonce est venue surprendre si douloureusement l'Europe Chrétienne, proviennent sans contredit de la même source, et il est naturel que les Puissances qui avaient cru les éloigner à jamais par les arrangements de 1845, reconnaissant ou leur insuffisance ou leur inexécution, soient amenées à prendre, de concert avec la Porte, des mesures plus énergiques et plus efficaces.

Mais on ne saurait méconnaître, en même temps, que si la question est locale quant à l'étendue du territoire qui est le théâtre des événements, elle a toujours pris des proportions Européennes par l'influence qu'en ressentent nécessairement la situation de la Turquie et les relations entre les divers Etats de l'Europe. En effet, nous n'avons pas besoin de rappeler combien de fois, avant d'aboutir aux règlements de 1845, les affaires de Syrie faillirent exposer l'Europe à des complications sérieuses.

D'autre part, on ne saurait oublier non plus que le but principal que les Puissances se sont proposé en admettant, en 1855, la Turquie aux avantages du concert Européen a été précisément d'éviter que des questions locales ou des Conventions particulières assez importantes pour donner lieu à une intervention armée pussent se soustraire au contrôle et à l'action collective de toutes indistinctement les Puissances signataires du Traité qui créait un nouveau droit public relativement à la Turquie.

Si, par conséquent, la situation actuelle se rattache, quant aux faits, aux arrangements de 1845, quant au mode de procéder, il nous semble de toute évidence qu'il doit être cherché dans les stipulations de 1856, auxquelles la Sardaigne a été partie.

Mais si les considérations qui précèdent confirment la certitude où nous avons toujours été de ne réclamer qu'un droit consacré par un Traité solennel, nous nous félicitons trop de l'accord qui s'est heureusement établie pour que nous voulions courir la moindre risque de soulever des dissentiments propres à le troubler, ou d'entraver l'action bienfaisante que l'Europe s'est décidée à exercer en faveur des populations ignominées par de si cruels désastres.

Nous n'ignorons pas, en effet, les obstacles qu'auraient opposé à l'accueil de notre demande les efforts constants de l'Autriche pour nous exclure d'accords qui devraient être à l'abri de toute jalousie politique, et auxquels effectivement l'esprit conciliant des autres Puissances a voulu imprimer le caractère d'une généreuse manifestation de la Chrétienté.

Aussi, tout en réservant formellement les droits que lui confère le Traité de Paris, le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté s'abstiendra-t-il en ce moment d'insister davantage dans ses réclamations.

Mais en donnant ce gage de l'esprit de conciliation dont il est animé en présence d'une cause où la Chrétienté toute entière doit témoigner de la solidarité de ses sentiments, la Cour de Turin est persuadée que si la question qui actuellement est considérée comme locale, et limitée en quelque sorte par les règlements de 1845, venait à se généraliser et à toucher aux rapports établis par le nouveau droit public entre la Turquie et les autres Puissances de l'Europe, la Sardaigne sera appelée à prendre part aux délibérations communes.

Je vous autorise, M. le Marquis, à donner copie de la présente dépêche à Lord John Russell.

Agréé, &c.
(Signé) C. CAVOUR.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received August 11.)

(No. 1,060. Most Confidential.)

My Lord,

Paris, August 10, 1860.

WITH reference to Mr. Fane's despatch No. 10 of the 2nd instant, inclosed in copy in your Lordship's despatch No. of the instant, stating Count Rechberg's reasons for supporting the Russian proposal of adding a Secret Article to the Convention relating to Syria, by which the stipulations of that Convention should be made applicable to other parts of the Turkish dominions, I have the honour to observe that I know, from undoubted authority, that Prince Metternich has stated his belief that Count Rechberg was secretly worked upon by Prince Gortchakoff, who told the Austrian Prime Minister that a plot was ripe for instituting a Kingdom or Republic of Roumania, and gave it to be understood that the policy of Russia would very much depend on the line which Austria might take with regard to the Secret Article; remarking, at the same time, that Austria had a greater interest than any other Power in obtaining the insertion of such an Article, having so many subjects of Roumain origin, who would, without doubt, desire to form part of the new State.

As this information has been communicated to me under the seal of secrecy, I beg that your Lordship will consider this despatch to be entirely confidential.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

No. 89.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received August 11.)

(No. 1,065.)

My Lord,

Paris, August 10, 1860.

ON my pressing M. Thouvenel again this afternoon to make Her Majesty's Government acquainted with the instructions furnished to General Beaufort, his Excellency said that they had been already communicated to your Lordship, and that you had expressed yourself to be perfectly satisfied with them.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

No. 90.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received August 11.)

(No. 1,069.)

My Lord,

Paris, August 10, 1860.

I HAVE informed M. Thouvenel in the words of your Lordship's despatch No. 789 of yesterday's date, that Her Majesty's Government agree with that of France respecting the instructions to be issued to the Commissioners who are to proceed to Syria, that, to meet the wishes of the French Government, they are satisfied that those instructions should issue from the Five Powers, but that they consider it of the utmost importance that the Commissioners should be named, and begin their operations as soon as possible.

M. Thouvenel said that he was much embarrassed as to the choice of a Commissioner on the part of France. It was essential to find a person who had some knowledge of the country and people with whom he would have to deal, but unfortunately those from whom he could choose would, he feared, not be favourably viewed by Her Majesty's Government. He could have wished to send M. Bourré, but he felt sure the choice would not be approved in London. The nomination of M. Sabatier would probably be equally disliked. Almost the only individual who remained to them was M. Poujade, and as he had generally agreed well with his British colleagues, M. Thouvenel

thought that he should name him, though he was not blind to the defect of a certain impetuosity of character which required control.

Another reason for not naming M. Bourré was, that in all probability his nomination would be followed by that of M. Basily, on the part of Russia, which it was desirable to avoid.

He had gone as far as he could, M. Thouvenel said, in hinting this to the Russian Government.

In the meantime, no answer had been received from any of the Governments to whom the proposal of sending a Commission had been made. M. Thouvenel suggested that it might be well that Her Majesty's Government should also press those Governments to come to some decision.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

No. 91.

Proposed Instructions to the French Commissioner in Syria.—(Communicated by the Count de Jaucourt, August 11.)

VOUS connaissez l'objet de la mission dont vous êtes chargé, comme Commissaire de l'Empereur en Syrie, et vous comprendrez que je ne saurais ni prévoir toutes les difficultés que vous aurez à surmonter, ni vous indiquer en détail les divers points que vous aurez à résoudre. Je me bornerai donc à vous donner ici les directions générales qui devront vous servir de règle de conduite.

Votre premier soin, après vous être mis en rapport avec les Commissaires d'Autriche, de Grande Bretagne, de Prusse, et de Russie, et avec celui du Sultan, sera de rechercher, de concert avec eux, l'origine et les causes des événements, de déterminer la part de responsabilité des chefs de l'insurrection et des agents de l'administration, et de provoquer la punition des coupables. Les assurances qui nous ont été données à Constantinople et les pouvoirs que le Commissaire Ottoman a reçu du Sultan ne permettent pas de douter que vous ne trouviez, de sa part, tout le concours que vous avez droit d'en attendre pour que l'enquête à laquelle vous vous livrez avec lui réponde aux conditions d'une sévère et impartiale justice.

Il conviendra, d'autre part, d'apprécier l'étendue des désastres qui ont frappé les populations Chrétiennes et de combiner les moyens propres à soulager et même à indemniser, autant que possible, les pertes constatées. C'est là une œuvre de réparation à laquelle tous les Commissaires voudront consacrer leurs efforts. Mais il est un autre point qui mérite également de fixer votre attention; je veux parler des arrangements qu'il pourrait être utile de prendre pour assurer, à l'avenir, l'ordre et la sécurité de Syrie et conjurer le retour des mêmes calamités. Vous puiserez, dans une appréciation équitable des faits et des circonstances qui les ont motivés, les lumières nécessaires pour suggérer les modifications qu'il y aurait lieu d'apporter à l'état de choses actuel et particulièrement dans l'organisation de la Montagne, telle que l'ont établie les arrangements de 1842 et 1845. L'exposé de ces modifications devrait faire l'objet d'un rapport commun qui serait arrêté par tous les Commissaires collectivement.

Telles sont, Monsieur, les seules instructions qu'il me paraisse pour le moment utile de vous donner. Les Commissaires d'Autriche, de Grande Bretagne, de Prusse, et de Russie, en reçoivent d'identiques; vous vous appliquerez à entretenir avec eux un parfait accord, et vous les trouverez, je n'en doute pas, animés de leur côté des mêmes dispositions à votre égard.

J'invite les Consuls de Sa Majesté en Syrie à répondre à toutes les demandes que vous auriez à leur adresser et à vous prêter un entier concours pour l'accomplissement de votre mission.

Je communique les présentes instructions à M. l'Ambassadeur de Sa Majesté à Constantinople. Vous aurez soin de lui transmettre toutes les informations qui pourront l'intéresser, et vous vous conformerez aux directions spéciales qu'il serait dans le cas de vous adresser.

No. 92.

Consul-General Moore to Lord J. Russell.—(Received August 12.)

(No. 25.)

My Lord,

Beyrout, July 25, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to inclose copy of my despatch of this date, with its inclosure, to Her Majesty's Ambassador at the Porte, reporting the departure of Fuad Pasha for Damascus, and latest intelligence received from that city.

Subsequent to the outbreak at Damascus, the Turkish Irregular Cavalry (chiefly Kurds) in garrison at Baalbeck, under the command of Hassan Agha Yaziji, fell upon the Christian population both of the town and adjacent country, and committed dreadful excesses against them. Aided by Metualis and Mussulmans of the district, they plundered the houses of the Christians, violated the women, sacked and burnt about twenty churches and two convents, and generally laid waste that part of the district inhabited by Christians, of whom several were killed.

The Greek Catholic Bishop of Baalbeck has to-day sent me, in common with the other Consuls of the Great Powers, a statement of these frightful disasters; want of time compels me to defer transmitting a translation of the Prelate's letter to a future occasion. He estimates the losses of the Christians at 20,000 purses (80,000*l.*); he himself had sought refuge in flight. Of the Christians some fled, and others embraced Mahometanism to save their lives.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. MOORE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 92.

Consul-General Moore to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, July 28, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to state that Fuad Pasha left for Damascus yesterday afternoon. His Excellency took with him two battalions of troops and six pieces of artillery. He expressed to me his determination to act with the utmost rigour at Damascus. Late in the evening a Turkish gun-boat arrived direct from Constantinople, whence she had been dispatched with letters for Fuad Pasha in consequence of the receipt at the Porte of the news of the outbreak at Damascus. A courier was immediately despatched with the letters and came up with Fuad Pasha a few hours from Beyrout. This gun-boat returns to Constantinople this evening, and I avail myself of the opportunity, through the kindness of Admiral Moustapha Pasha, to transmit this despatch to your Excellency.

I beg to inclose the copy of a letter I have received from Mr. Cyril Graham (who had gone to Damascus with M. Outrey, the French Consul there) from which your Excellency will learn the renewed critical state of things in that city. Other private letters speak much in the same sense. Mr. Brant, however, is more hopeful, though he says that all will depend upon the manner in which Fuad Pasha acts.

Previously to his departure, Fuad Pasha deputed Frango Effendi, one of his Attachés, and Bishop Tobia, to proceed to the Kesrouan, in order to endeavour to bring about a reconciliation between the peasantry and the Hazin Sheiks who, as your Excellency is aware, were expelled by the peasantry from that district about two years ago. The Commissioners left yesterday for Djouin Bay in a small Turkish man-of-war. The Pasha's first intention was to have also sent the Christian Kaimakam, but on the Bishop's pointing out to him the extreme danger of such a step, the Kesrouan being strongly disaffected towards the Kaimakam, his Excellency renounced the idea. This functionary

is universally detested in the Lebanon, and much of what has occurred is laid at his door.

Her Majesty's ship "Neptune" is in sight.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. MOORE.

Inclosure 2 in No. 92.

Mr. Graham to Consul-General Moore.

My dear Sir,

Damascus, July 26, 1860.

I ARRIVED here safely yesterday at noon. In the Bekaa, to our surprise, we found the Mushir, new Commander-in-chief of the troops in Syria, encamped with his troops. He said that he was not to proceed until the arrival of Fuad Pasha. Why? This seems again to be a foolish arrangement and rather shakes one's confidence in his Excellency.

We had for our escort sixty Algerines and fifteen Druses of Asad Amer of Hit, and no Nizam; M. Outrey having refused at the last moment to have any. At Dimas we were met by an additional escort of twenty-five of Abd-el-Kader's men, and with all this troop we entered the city, much to the astonishment of all the Moslems. In addition to our escort a Turkish officer and some troops met us at the gate to induct us. They proposed taking us as little as possible through the town, and wound in and out of the suburbs until we came to the gate nearest the house of Abd-el-Kader. As we approached his street we found the way lined with armed Mogharbeh, and we descended at his house.

Mr. Brant came to meet me there, and after a short conversation with the Emir I went off with Mr. Brant to the British Consulate.

Mr. Brant I found in better health than I had expected, and in as good hope as ever.

Yesterday, I saw, besides, M. Lanusse, the Belgian Vice-Consul, and M. Bambino, French Consular Agent at Hamah, as also Amin Pasha (Baron Schwartzberg), and Mr. Robson.

Of these, M. Lanusse, M. Bambino, and Mr. Robson told me that things were not looking so well again, that the people who for three or four days had gone about without arms had now resumed their arms again, and that the slight confidence which had begun to dawn on the Christians at the arrival of Mohammed Pasha was now fast going. And the general impression was that unless the new Mushir arrived very soon, and on his arrival employed very prompt measures, there would be a repetition of the slaughter. Mr. Brant, on the other hand, seems slow to believe any report, and unless it can be clearly proved to him that such and such is the case he will not give credit to any statement. However, you will see from his despatch how he views the present state of things.

To-day, I have again seen Mr. Robson, have received visits from the chief men of Asad Amer of Hit, and from Sheikh Migwel.* Mr. Robson had been insulted both yesterday in returning home, and to-day in coming here. At my recommendation he sent yesterday to Yebrud to prepare Mr. Crawford for leaving. Mr. Robson told us the town was full of armed men, and in short his opinion is that a second massacre will take place.

I asked Migwel what he heard about these things. He told me the Moslems did not think of any more bloodshed unless the news should arrive of a proposed occupation of the country by foreign troops, but in that case they were determined to spare no one; "and," said he, "people from the Hauran and the Arabs, and people from all around, would join and fall upon the town." He is a man who is, I suspect, well acquainted with the opinions of the people, and probably says what is really the case. This afternoon I went all through the Christian quarter; I went into all the finest houses—houses which I had been in a few weeks ago when they were the show-houses of Damascus—now nothing but the walls remain, in many cases not above five or six feet high from the ground. In many the bodies lay unburied, and the stench generally was

* Husband of Lady Ellenborough.

horrid, for all the wells were full of bodies. I saw a head alone here and there, and limbs lying alone, and in one house the dogs were still at work; two houses were on fire; only the night before last, I think, the Moslems set fire to some houses. In short, the whole Christian quarter is burned, not one house remains untouched; the only Christian houses which have been saved are those in the Muslim quarters, and all these have been gutted and plundered. The monasteries are also black ruins; the new convent of Terra Santa, being strongly built of stone, remains more entire than the others. The well was full of dead bodies.

In short, I may say, that from all I gather from the behaviour of the Moslems as I went through the streets, and from the general report of the people, a second massacre is most certainly looked forward to, and the plan will be carried out, unless Fuad acts very differently from the Pasha who has been here the last week. The Moslems' cry is, "Let us finish the Christians; let us exterminate them;" and, indeed, they were only prevented from doing so by the momentary fear caused by the arrival of Mohammed Pasha. I think it most probable that the Serai would have been the scene of atrocities like those at the Deir and Hasbeya. About 12,000 Christians are now there, and the new Pasha is such a coward that he is afraid to show himself in the town; in short, he seems to inherit at least the imbecility of Ahmet. If Fuad has not yet left Beyrout I think you should insist on his ordering the new Seraskier to come on here instead of waiting for him, as a little delay may cause the greatest calamity. We shall long for the arrival of your letters to-morrow; but I trust there will be no "reports" of an occupation; if so, I feel convinced the excitement, which has not subsided, will break out again, and then nothing will calm the people; and Fuad and his force may arrive just after all is over.

I have nothing more, I think, to say to-day.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CYRIL C. GRAHAM.

No. 93

Sir H. Bulwer to Lord J. Russell.—(Received August 12.)

(No. 476.)

My Lord,

Therapia, August 1, 1860.

ALL that I can say with respect to Syria by this post is, that order has been restored at Damascus, and that Fuad Pasha was, according to the last accounts, proceeding there.

The Commander, Achmet Pasha, had been sent here for trial; but Aali finding he accused others, and that his conduct could only be adequately inquired into or dealt with at Damascus, has sent him back thither.

There is a strong feeling against him at the Porte, and there seems every reason to believe that the man was always known to be a coward, which is not the usual defect of a Turk.

The Druses and Maronites have quietly returned to their respective homes, having signed a peace, and no accounts of further disturbances have reached us; though M. de Lanusse, the French Agent at Damascus, seems to expect some. This gentleman gives the killed at Damascus at 8,000; Colonel O'Reilly writes 500; Mr. Brant, I believe, 5,000. But the fact is, no one yet can pretend to give a correct figure of this kind.

That there are many exaggerations is certain, since, putting together the number of persons said by some parties to be killed, to be saved by Abd-el-Kader, and to be in the citadel, the amount would be more, perhaps, than double the number of Christians that ever were in Damascus.

But sufficient is known to bear witness to a horrible catastrophe comprising murder, robbery, and pillage.

The priests and higher orders of Mussulmans seem to have behaved well, and to have done their utmost to save the lives of the Christians and tranquillize the disorder, in which but a small mob seem at first to have been concerned.

The conflagration in the city attracted the Arabs on its outskirts. Their

entry into the town gave a new character to affairs, and from that moment a great portion of the city seems to have been delivered up mercilessly to plunder and the sword.

It will be very important as to the future to ascertain, as accurately as possible, the primary causes of these disturbances, and as to how far the Seraskier's conduct was the effect of fear or of treachery.

To imagine that the Government here was a party to such treachery, is, in my opinion, out of the question; but as the Pasha himself was dissatisfied with the Porte, and wished to prove he had been left with an inefficient force, it is possible that may have influenced his conduct; this feeling, if any other motive than fear, is necessary to account for it.

The officers concerned at Hasbeyah and Zahlé will be tried by court-martial. Mr. Moore seems to say that the idea of the arrival of French troops in Syria appears rather to cause excitement and alarm as to future troubles, but at present, at all events, things are settling down; and it will be desirable, if a French force is sent, that it should be rather kept in the sea-towns than employed in the interior, where the Turkish forces might be used, and European Commissioners sent, if any question in which the European Governments are interested has to be investigated.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. L. BULWER.

No. 94.

Sir H. Bulwer to Lord J. Russell.—(Received August 12.)

(No. 477.)

My Lord,

Therapia, August 1, 1860.

THE accompanying letter from Colonel O'Reilly, who is attached to Fuad Pasha's mission in Syria, reached me yesterday, and I think it of sufficient interest to transmit it to your Lordship.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. L. BULWER.

Inclosure in No. 94.

Colonel O'Reilly to Sir H. Bulwer.

My dear Sir,

Beyrout, July 18, 1860.

FUAD PASHA has requested me to write to you and to give you an account of what he has found to be the state of the country, and of the subjects contained in his official despatches, which he thinks you would desire to have information of. He desires me at the same time to present his compliments, and to say that were it not owing to the great press of affairs, he would write to your Excellency himself. He finds, and I myself believe, the state of the country round Beyrout to be perfectly tranquil, as a kind of truce between the Druses and Maronites has been made, and the former have returned to their villages. He is endeavouring to restore the public confidence in the authorities, which has been shaken by the conduct of the Turkish Commanders in some places: for this purpose he has ordered Khoorshid Pasha to visit in a corvette the towns on the coast as far as Latakia, and the Vice-Admiral Mustapha Pasha to proceed for the same purpose as far as Acre, sending along with him one of the Catholic members of the Commission to distribute money to be used for the relief of the wounded Maronites along the coast; he has already given money to the Sisters of Charity (French) here, for the additional expenses of their hospital incurred by the reception of the wounded.

At Damascus there has been a succession of outrages for several days, all directed against the Christians of the town. The whole of the settled Mussulman population of Damascus, the members of the Ulemah, and other chiefs of that religion, endeavoured to stop the proceedings of the rioters, who were men from a suburb of the city called the Meidan, inhabited by an unsettled population

of Hauranese and Arabs and by the Kurdish population in the neighbourhood of the city. The actors of the scenes were all Mussulmans or Druses, but all respectable Mussulmans endeavoured to arrest the movement. Their efforts do not seem to have been supported by the action of the military authorities. Fuad Pasha has in consequence ordered Ahmet Pasha, late Commander-in-chief, to come to Beyrout to surrender himself. Osman Bey and Abd-ul-Salam Bey, the officers who remained passive at Hasbeyah and Deir-el-Kamar during the massacres, are also to be tried by court-martial this week. The number of killed at Damascus is about 500, the remainder of the inhabitants of the Christian quarters having found a refuge in the Castle.

Fuad Pasha has received reports since his arrival which assure him of the perfect restoration of tranquillity.

He has dispatched a letter to Aleppo directing the Commandant to resort to force at once if anything occurs, and to devote himself and his troops to the last man for the protection of order.

In a few days more we will advance into the interior, when his Excellency intends to inflict a most severe punishment on the guilty parties at Damascus.

I have, &c.
(Signed) E. O'REILLY.

No. 95.

Sir H. Bulwer to Lord J. Russell.—(Received August 12.)

(No. 479.)

My Lord,

Therapia, August 1, 1860.

I INCLOSE your Lordship the copy of a telegram written to the Turkish Ambassador at Paris, in consequence of the French Ambassador's communication here, relative to the sending of foreign troops to Syria.

Aali Pasha read me another communication which he also addressed to his Ambassador at Paris, but of which I have not a copy, stating the many objections the Porte had to this expedition, on account of the excitement it might produce, and the evils that excitement might bring about.

His Highness believed also that such assistance is not necessary.

At the same time, understanding the feelings that may exist in Europe on this subject, he does not counsel the Sultan to oppose the wishes of the Great Powers, but rather urges those Powers to take into consideration the arguments he lays before them. As everything I could here say on this subject has either been said by me already, or will be urged by the Turkish Ambassador in London and Paris, I do not on this occasion trouble your Lordship with any additional remarks; but to sum up my opinions in a few words, I should say that Aali Pasha takes probably an exaggerated view of the consequences which an European intervention may produce, but that, at the same time, such an intervention is not without considerable danger, and may, from a variety of causes, including the excitement between rival populations, to which Aali Pasha alludes, cause further complications.

It is, therefore, better avoided, unless there is some strong necessity for it, or some clear object to be arrived at by it; but that if either such strong necessity exists, or such a definite object is to be arrived at, the considerations to which the acting Grand Vizier calls attention, can only be regarded so far as relates to the taking of every possible precaution against the causes for apprehension which he suggests.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. L. BULWER.

Inclosure in No. 95.

Aali Pasha to Ahmed Vefyk Efendi.

(Translation.)

July 27, 1860.

HIS MAJESTY has been more deeply impressed than any one else by the afflicting events of Syria. The severe punishment of the malefactors who

have been the cause of, or instrumental in them, as well as of those functionaries who have not performed their duty in preventing them, has been determined upon. Full authority and ample forces have been given to Fuad Pasha for that purpose. If it please God, the matter will be soon settled in accordance with the wishes of the sympathising heart of His Majesty, those of all right thinking Mussulmans, and of Europe itself.

The telegram sent to the French Government respecting the sending of a European Commission for the purpose of inquiring into the circumstances attending the above events and for acting in conjunction with the Imperial (Turkish) functionaries in the reform of the Regulations of 1845, as well as respecting the sending of a military force to assist His Majesty's Government in virtue of a Convention to be concluded between His Majesty's and the European Governments, and finally respecting the granting by telegraph to His Majesty's Representative in Paris of full powers for discussing such a Convention with the Plenipotentiaries of those Governments, has been communicated by M. de Lavalette to the Sublime Porte.

The necessities of the case on these communications, have been repeatedly weighed and discussed in the Council of Ministers. The question of the Commission has been considered as one in the natural order of things.

Respecting the sending of troops at this juncture to Syria, certain considerations of the most important nature have been communicated to the French and British Ambassadors at Constantinople. Moreover according to the recent advices of the Porte, it is demonstrated and proved that the military forces of His Majesty at present in Syria are sufficient for satisfying the present necessities, and for obtaining the conclusion desired by His Majesty and His Allies. Nevertheless should it appear to the illustrious Governments, who are the friends and Allies of the Sultan's Government, during the discussion of the matter by their respective Plenipotentiaries assembled at Paris, that in order to ensure the speedy and complete return as well as the consolidation of order, peace, and the authority of His Majesty's Government in Syria, it is necessary to send thither a European military force to act in concert with the Porte's Commissioner. His Majesty has been pleased to order that you be appointed and invested with full powers for discussing and signing a Convention with the Representatives of the above Governments on the following bases:—

1. The movements and action of the troops to be sent are to take place in concert with the authorities of the Porte.
2. Their number is to be apportioned according to the present situation.
3. The time of their return and withdrawal is to be specified.

You will immediately communicate with M. Thouvenel in this sense, and give him a copy of this telegram.

No. 96.

Lord Bloomfield to Lord J. Russell. (Received August 13.)

(No. 299. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Berlin, August 11, 1860.

THE vexation of the Russian Government at the failure of Count Kisseleff in obtaining the insertion in the Syrian Convention of the additional Article proposed by them, has been loudly expressed here by Baron Budberg. He says that the Emperor and Prince Gortchakoff are both extremely annoyed at what has occurred, and he goes so far as to say that Count Kisseleff's conduct was on the point of being disavowed, and he adds that, if he himself had been charged with the negotiations, he should have retired from the Conference rather than put his name to the protocol.

Baron Budberg has now been seeking an explanation from Baron Schleinitz as to the passive conduct of Prince Reuss on the 3rd of August, for he appears to have understood that the Prussian Chargé d'Affaires was instructed to give his best support to the Russian Article at the Conference, and the Baron therefore reproaches this Government with the silence observed by their Representative, and with his not having said one word in support of Count Kisseleff.

Baron Budberg has also been seeking to persuade the French Minister at

this Court that Baron Schleinitz had spoken in a different sense to each of them, but Prince de la Tour d'Auvergne assures me that it was not so, and says that Baron Budberg called on him some time ago, just after he had left the Foreign Department, and repeated to him what Baron Schleinitz had said on the subject of the proposed Russian Article, and that his account of his Excellency's observations completely tallied with what Baron Schleinitz had said to himself on the subject a short time before.

Thus it would seem that it was the Russian Government which had been deceived by their own Agents, who had led them to believe that they could count on the cordial support of Austria and Prussia at the Conference, whilst the Cabinets of Vienna and Berlin appear never to have intended giving more than a simple adhesion to the Russian Article, provided it were favourably considered by the majority of the Plenipotentiaries.

I have, &c.
(Signed) BLOOMFIELD.

No. 97.

Lord J. Russell to Earl Cowley.

(No. 794.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, August 13, 1860.

AS there may arise, in the opinion of the French Government, a necessity for dispatching to Syria the remaining 6,000 men stipulated for in the Protocol of the 3rd instant, your Excellency is instructed in such case to report such opinion of the French Government.

Her Majesty's Government will then consider whether there is a cause for such reinforcement, and whether the half or even the whole of the additional 6,000 men shall be furnished by Her Majesty.

At present it seems desirable that the French Division should not proceed to Damascus, as the reports from thence show that they might cause a fresh outbreak of Mahometan fanaticism.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 98.

Lord J. Russell to Earl Cowley.

(No. 795.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, August 13, 1860.

IN reply to your Excellency's despatch No. 1,069 of the 18th instant, I have to state to you that Her Majesty's Government have no objection to the appointment of M. Poujade as French Commissioner in Syria, nor would they have objected to the employment of M. Bourré in that capacity had the French Government thought fit to appoint him.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 99.

Lord J. Russell to Lord Dufferin.

(No. 6.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, August 14, 1860.

YOU are already informed of the object of the mission with which you are charged, as a member of the Commission about to proceed to Syria, and you will easily understand that it is impossible for Her Majesty's Government to foresee all the difficulties you will have to encounter, or to point out to you in detail the different matters on which you may have to treat. I will therefore confine myself at present to those general directions which may serve to guide your conduct, without giving any specific instructions.

Your first care, after putting yourself in relation with the Commissioner of the Porte, and with those of Austria, France, Prussia, and Russia, will be to inquire, in concert with them, into the origin and causes of the late deplorable events, to determine the share of responsibility incurred by the chiefs of the insurrection and the agents of the administration, and to call for the punishment of the guilty. The assurances which have been given at Constantinople, and the powers which the Turkish Commissioner has received from the Sultan, exclude all doubt that you will find on his part all the assistance which you have a right to expect in order that the inquiry which you will conduct in concert with him may have for its result the execution of severe and impartial justice with regard to the chiefs, as well as the subordinate instruments of crime.

It will be your duty, on the other hand, to appreciate the extent of the disasters which have been suffered by the Christians, and to consider of the means best fitted to alleviate, and even to indemnify, as far as possible, the losses which have been sustained. There is another point which equally deserves attention; I mean the arrangements which it may be useful to make in order to establish for the future order and security in Syria, and prevent the return of similar calamities. You will find in an equitable examination of facts, and of the circumstances which have given rise to them, the data necessary to enable you to suggest the modifications which it may be necessary to make in the present arrangements, and in the organization of the Lebanon, as settled in 1842 and 1845. A report on these modifications should be made by all the Commissioners collectively.

Such are the only instructions which I have to give you. The Commissioners of Austria, of France, of Prussia, and of Russia, will, I have reason to hope, receive instructions identical in substance; you will apply yourself to act with your colleagues in the spirit of harmony, and you will, I doubt not, find them animated by the same spirit.

I shall communicate the present instructions to Her Majesty's Ambassador, to whom as well as to me you will transmit your reports.

I shall also desire Her Majesty's Consuls in Syria to lend you every aid which may contribute to the success of your mission.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 100.

Lord J. Russell to Lord Dufferin.

(No. 7.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, August 14, 1860.

I HAVE now the honour to forward to your Lordship the instructions of Her Majesty's Government for your guidance as Her Majesty's Commissioner to Syria.

They have been framed in complete accordance with the French Government, and will be found identical, I trust, with those of the Governments of Austria, Prussia, and Russia. You will arrange with Her Majesty's Ambassador at the Porte the time of your leaving Constantinople for the coast of Syria.

In my opinion it is desirable you should enter upon your duties as soon as possible, in order that justice, by being speedy, may produce the more effect.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 101.

Lord J. Russell to Lord Dufferin.

(No. 8.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, August 14, 1860.

AMONG the subjects which will require your immediate attention, the condition of the Christian women who have been carried away to Turkish harems is one of the most urgent.

You will press upon Fuad Pasha and your European colleagues the necessity of taking immediate measures for rescuing those unfortunate women from their lamentable situation. Many of them, no doubt, have lost their husbands, fathers, and brothers; so that it will be a matter of some difficulty to find places of refuge where their lives will be safe, and means of sustenance can be ensured to them.

But upon these and other details Her Majesty's Government must leave you to exercise your own judgment.

Much will, of course, depend on the selection and guidance of the Authorities to whom this rich and fertile country is in future to be confided. Pashas like Khoorshid of Beyrout, and Achmet of Damascus, would pervert the best regulations that can be framed. Your Lordship will, therefore, sedulously inquire into the character and disposition of any new Governors who may be likely to receive appointments from the well-meaning, but feeble and corrupt Government of Constantinople.

I am &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 102.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received August 15.)

(No. 1,083.)

My Lord,

Paris, August 14, 1860.

M. BECLARD, who was for some time Consul-General in Wallachia, will be the French Commissioner in Syria.

M. Thouvenel has been informed that the Russian Government have appointed M. Novikow, Secretary to the Russian Legation at Constantinople, to be the Russian Commissioner.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

No. 103.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received August 15.)

(No. 1,085.)

My Lord,

Paris, August 14, 1860.

WITH reference to your Lordship's despatch No. 799 of yesterday's date, I have the honour to state that there does not appear to be any desire to reinforce the French force sent to Syria. M. Thouvenel certainly does not contemplate any necessity of the kind.

On my remarking to his Excellency that the state of public feeling at Damascus seemed to render it desirable that the French troops should not proceed thither, his Excellency observed that he believed that there was no intention of their going there, certainly not without the request of Fuad Pasha.

He said farther, that he thought that Her Majesty's Government might rely on General Beaufort's doing nothing to provoke public feeling. That officer had been strictly cautioned by the Emperor on this very point.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

No. 104.

Count Apponyi to Lord Wodehouse.—(Received August 16.)

Cher Lord Wodehouse,

Chandos House, le 16 Août, 1860.

JE commence nos relations officielles par vous prévenir le Gouvernement Autrichien a fait choix de M. de Weckbecker, Consul-Général de l'Empereur à Beiruth, pour le représenter dans la Commission d'Enquête destinée à examiner l'état de choses en Syrie.

Veillez me dire si vous avez des heures où je puis être sûr de vous trouver, soit au Foreign Office soit à Bryanston Square, ou si je dois vous écrire chaque fois lorsque j'aurai besoin de vous entretenir.

Agréez, &c.
(Signé) APPONYI.

No. 105.

Lord J. Russell to Sir H. Bulwer.

(No. 424.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, August 16, 1860.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 379 of the 31st ultimo, I transmit for your Excellency's information copies of the instructions which I have given to Lord Dufferin for his guidance as Her Majesty's Commissioner to Syria.*

They have been drawn up in accordance with the instructions furnished by the French Government to their Commissioner, and will, I trust, be found identical with those furnished to the Commissioners of Austria, Prussia, and Russia.

You will have learnt from my telegram of the 13th instant that Her Majesty's Government considers it desirable that the Commission should enter upon their duties as soon as possible, and Lord Dufferin may, therefore, have probably proceeded to Syria before your Excellency receives this despatch. In which case I have to instruct you to forward to his Lordship the instructions which are herewith inclosed, together with any further information which your Excellency may consider will assist him in the object of his mission.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 106.

Consul-General Moore to Lord J. Russell.—(Received August 17.)

(No. 24.)

My Lord,

Beyrout, July 26, 1860.

I HAVE the honor to report that Her Majesty's ship "Marlborough," bearing the flag of Vice-Admiral Martin, arrived here on the 24th instant, at sunset. On the following day Her Majesty's ship "Victor Emmanuel" joined the flag-ship.

I lost no time in waiting on the Admiral. Next day Admiral Martin, attended by his Staff and myself, called upon Fuad Pasha, who received the Admiral with the honors due to his rank.

After the interchange of the usual civilities, Admiral Martin, seconded by myself, made a strong representation to the Imperial Commissioner against the contemplated continuance of Khorsheed Pasha in his post of Governor-General on his return from Latakia. The Admiral very ably and impressively argued the point, and left with the Pasha a memorandum on the subject, a copy of which I beg leave to inclose for your Lordship's perusal.

Admiral Martin had previously been pleased to show me the memorandum, in which I had expressed my entire concurrence.

In reply, Fuad Pasha said that he would consider the matter before giving an answer, and that, as he purposed returning the visit the next day, he would do so in person. His Excellency accordingly came on board the flag-ship this morning, where I had preceded him, at the request of the Admiral, who wished me to be present at the interview. Fuad Pasha told us that he had decided upon adopting Admiral Martin's recommendation, as a proof, he said, of his desire to do what was right, of deference to the judgment of the Commander-in-chief, and of his readiness to do what was agreeable to the English, allies of his Government.

Subsequently Fuad Pasha wrote me and the other Foreign Authorities the usual circular announcing the suspension from his functions of Khorsheed Pasha, and the appointment of Admiral Mustapha Pasha to be Governor in his stead, *ad interim*. Inclosed is a copy of Fuad Pasha's letter to me.

It would be superfluous for me to dwell upon the propriety and wisdom of Admiral Martin's demand. No measure could have been more called for, whether viewed in its retributive aspect or in its reassuring effects upon the Christian population of Beyrout and elsewhere.

I beg here to rectify an inexactitude occurring in my despatch No. 40, relating to the conduct of Khorsheed Pasha. I had there said that this functionary arrived at Deir-el-Kamar too late to prevent the massacre. It has subsequently transpired that on the evening of his arrival there, and on the following day, the slaughter, burning of houses, and pillage went on. It is an ascertained fact that on the day after his arrival, twenty-two Christians who had taken refuge in the house of the Druse Kaimakam's Secretary were butchered in a body; and it is stated that many more who had concealed themselves in sewers and caverns in the town, and whose situation was brought in time to the knowledge of the Pasha, were left to their fate.

Khorsheed Pasha returned this morning from Latakia, but has not been permitted to land; he is to proceed to Constantinople.

Fuad Pasha to-day arrested Khorsheed Pasha's Kahia, Wasfi Effendi, and the Mutsellim of Deir-el-Kamar.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. MOORE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 106.

Memorandum.

A MOST grievous wrong has been inflicted upon the civilized world by the barbarities which have been committed upon the Christian population in Syria.

The Turkish local authorities have been direct parties to the barbarities by permitting the soldiers and Moslem population to aid the Druses, and after the defeat of the Christians to join in murdering the males, and in committing the foulest crimes upon the women and female children.

The Christian world cannot and ought not to leave these enormities unredressed, and it must be evident that it will not rest satisfied with any measure short of that which shall make a recurrence of the enormities impossible.

The Turkish Government will have no claim to consideration if it should not do voluntary and ample justice. The matter would probably be taken out of their hands if they exhibited any indication of shortcoming.

They would be deemed by enemies as participators, and by friends as too feeble to govern.

If they would avoid foreign interference, the limit or consequences of which it may not be difficult to imagine, they must be prompt in declaring that they have, with every other civilized Government, an abhorrence of the infamous deeds that have been perpetrated in Syria. Their declarations must be accompanied by acts of full justice to sufferers and conspicuous retribution to infamous functionaries.

The mere punishment of humble officials would be deemed an offensive trifling that would have no beneficial influence to restrain for the future.

The highest who have abused their power by participation or connivance in the grievous misery that has been heaped upon the Christian population of Syria should themselves suffer.

Anything less than this will only swell the account which the Turkish Government have to answer for their subordinates, and increase the evidence of complicity so strongly insisted upon by many, probably misinformed on the subject.

I have been told that his Excellency Khorsheed Pasha is to continue in authority in this Pashalic. I must express a hope that there is no intention of allowing him to hold the power he has so abused. But looking to the horrible cruelties to which, it is believed, he has been a willing party, and to the responsibilities in which I share with regard to the safety of the Christian population here, I must protest against his being allowed to retain a command, upon which

the safety of multitudes depend, for whom he has manifested such indifference and contempt.

(Signed) W. F. MARTIN.
"Marlborough," at Beyrout, July 25, 1860.

Inclosure 2 in No. 106.

Fuad Pasha to Consul-General Moore.

Beyrout, le 26 Juillet, 1860.

FUAD PASHA a l'honneur d'informer MM. les Consuls des Puissances amies résidants à Beyrout que, ayant jugé nécessaire de suspendre de ses fonctions le Gouverneur-Général de Sayda, Khoureshid Pasha, il vient de confier l'administration intérimaire de cette province à l'Amiral Moustapha Pasha, Commandant-en-chef des forces navales de Sa Majesté le Sultan dans la Méditerranée.

En portant cette décision à la connaissance de M. le Consul-Général de Sa Majesté Britannique, le Ministre des Affaires Etrangères en mission extraordinaire en Syrie a le ferme espoir que le Gouverneur *ad interim*, par les qualités qui le distinguent, imprimera aux relations des autorités locales avec le Consulat d'Angleterre la meilleure harmonie, et saura répondre à la confiance dont il vient d'être l'objet.

Fuad Pasha saisit, &c.

(Signé) FUAD PASHA

No. 107.

Sir H. Bulwer to Lord J. Russell.—(Received August 17.)

(No. 491. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Therapia, August 8, 1860.

I FORWARD to your Lordship the different despatches and instructions I have sent to Her Majesty's Agents in Syria.

It seems to me that, to restore peace with as little loss of life as possible, it is essential not to look at things merely from one point of view, but to place ourselves in the position of the different classes of the population amongst which excitement now prevails. The Christians are at this time alarmed at the Mussulmans, and not without reason, but there can be no doubt that it is the alarm which has lately been spread among the Mahometans as to the intentions of the Christians, I do not say of the native Christians especially, but of the Christians generally, which has been the principal cause of the fanatical zeal lately displayed, and the atrocious horrors lately committed by Mussulmans. It is no use disguising the fact that the Mussulmans throughout Syria, and (I speak with some apprehension as to the consequences) throughout Turkey generally, have lately considered that there is a plan on the part of Russia, and perhaps on the part of France, to subdue them and place a class they have been accustomed to consider as their inferiors over them.

I think Aali Pasha's apprehensions on this subject are in some degree exaggerated; but at the same time I fear in some degree as he does, that the arrival of French troops in Syria may increase a belief, which, however erroneous it may be, is nevertheless very widely spread. At all events, the only way to produce general tranquillity will be to allay as far as possible general suspicion; and what I say to Her Majesty's Agents is intended to enforce upon those Agents, amidst the difficult circumstances in which they are placed, this view, which I believe to be a correct one.

It is with great diffidence that I now venture to take within the scope of my observations a subject which may already have occupied the attention of Her Majesty's Government; but in relation to the rumours to which I have been thus adverting, I cannot help feeling some doubts as to

whether the presence of an English land force, since a French one is to be sent, might not be the means of calming exaggerated apprehensions as to Russian or French designs, and even of exercising a certain control over the conduct of the French Agents in Syria, who have generally been remarkable for carrying out the views of their Government in a very extreme manner. It is moreover to be observed that the Maronite population is, in point of feeling, French; and that whilst it is to be considered part of the French military force in Syria, it is also to be considered as likely to influence in no slight manner the tone and conduct and policy which the French civil Agents may pursue there. It is likewise to be noted, that a naval force might not be able to remain during the winter at Beyrout, and consequently whatever foreign force is then left there will, according to the present arrangement, be a French one.

This opens the way to various reflections. If the position in such manner occupied by France, should provoke a general Mahometan rising, the 6,000 troops she now sends will have of necessity to be increased to a very considerable extent; nor will it be easy either to limit the duration or the nature of their employment.

On the other hand, if France, standing alone with an army on the Syrian coast, is able by means of that army, small as it may be, to establish European views and give full authority to European opinions, it may not perhaps be saying too much to observe, that she is likely to be held throughout Asia, as she is throughout Africa, to be the one great European Power; and that a prestige of this kind once established, more especially if it consolidate itself by a permanent influence exercised over Egypt, may shake the moral authority of Great Britain in quarters where it is necessary for the safety of her Asiatic dominions it should be firmly maintained.

I am not myself one of those persons peculiarly sensitive on the subject of French aggrandisement, and I am one of those persons who feel the deepest interest in the maintenance of the best relations with France. It is impossible, moreover, for a Christian to be otherwise than struck with the deepest horror at the shedding of Christian blood, and the danger which may possibly at this moment threaten the Christian races in Syria. But I do not think we should hastily allow ourselves to be carried too far away by momentary impressions. Whilst feeling a natural desire to protect our co-religionists in one quarter we must not forget their position in others; and whilst anxious to maintain the most cordial intimacy with the French Government, we must remember the traditional policy of a long succession of French rulers, and the ambitious and aspiring, though in many respects noble and chivalrous, spirit of the French people. It is likewise to be borne in mind that the power of England in the world is essentially one of opinion; and that whatever weakens this power, undermines the foundations of our Empire by attacking the principle of their strength.

I fear, then, perhaps with an excessive susceptibility, anything which may show either a want of confidence in the course we are taking, or an inadequacy of means to support that course. There is another suggestion which I venture to make. The interference of a French army alone in one portion of the Ottoman Empire may be brought forward as an example to justify the interference of a Russian force alone in another; and I think it right to say that though the accounts I have hitherto received of plots and insurrections in European Turkey have been exaggerated, and that I have endeavoured as much as possible to calm those mutual apprehensions, which I look upon as the greatest incentive to mutual hostility—I am by no means prepared to say that something may not at last occur which by leading to conflict would, according to the barbarous habits of a barbarous society, lead to plunder and massacre, and to all those crimes which a French fleet is now sailing to Syria to suppress or to avenge.

With respect to the policy of France, I am bound to say that the conduct of M. de Lavalette has appeared on all occasions both frank and friendly; and I feel it difficult to form such a general appreciation upon partial and perhaps incidental circumstances coming within the limited scope of my own observations, as would justify me in pronouncing decidedly on any premeditated plan on the part of France favorable to Russian designs. My opinion, I confess, at times varies on this subject—but perhaps the soundest one to entertain is that events are working to bring about a state of things in which France and Russia may,

unless a new turn is given to present tendencies, be led by the force of circumstances into the same line of conduct.

As to the views of Russia, looking at her acts during the present year, I find it difficult to doubt. Her formal and public declaration that a Christian insurrection was likely to take place and might possibly overturn the Ottoman Empire—was in itself (and public attention has not perhaps been sufficiently directed to this point) sufficient as it became known to arouse the Mussulman feeling and excite a Mussulman outbreak.

In Asia, the agitation thus awakened was more likely to produce a sudden effect—but here also the same elements must be elaborating events more slowly towards the same results: and then what are the consequences? One Great Power plants her foot on that portion of Asia where her influence seems most easy to be extended—another has an example afforded to her under cover of which she may claim the right to pursue a similar course in that portion of Europe where her intervention would excite the greatest sympathy and produce the most serious consequences. When affairs are thus placed in one particular direction the smallest circumstance which may affect them becomes a matter of importance: and thus—as I see by your Lordship's telegraphic communication that the question of sending a further reinforcement of European troops is not yet decided—I venture to submit to your Lordship the ideas which the question as to whether England should or should not furnish a portion of those troops suggests to me. I am the more inclined to the joint intervention thus alluded to because I wish as much as possible to bring forward France and England together in Eastern affairs. Their union in war was a great event: their continued union in peace has a great and beneficial effect upon opinion as to maintaining the results of that war. And when I say "union," I do not mean more or less "lukewarm agreement," but "cordial and evident co-operation," such as is represented by the two countries acting as nearly as possible in the same manner. Any apparent cessation of this assimilation may be taken as a new phasis in Eastern affairs, and a perfectly different order of ideas be produced by the sight of a French army on Turkish soil without an English one, from that which would be produced by an English and French army combined.

I am sure that your Lordship will believe that I am aware that a thousand facts which have not come within the range of my reflections, and which are indeed beyond the limits of my knowledge, may wholly overpower the few arguments, or rather the few motives for consideration, which I have brought forward: but I have thought that your Lordship would at least pardon the expression of those opinions which, even if erroneous, would, I think, naturally occur to any one in my position; and I rely as usual on your Lordship's goodness to excuse what may be an excess of zeal, but what is in nowise an intentional proof of presumption.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. L. BULWER.

Inclosure 1 in No. 107.

Sir H. Bulwer to Consul-General Moore.

Sir,

Therapia, August 6, 1860.

I INCLOSE to you the instructions which I have given generally to Her Majesty's Consuls in the European portion of the Ottoman Empire.

It is to be expected that Syria will be more agitated than other portions of the Turkish dominions, and peculiar circumstances may render some modification of the inclosed instructions expedient in the particular locality; for extraordinary emergencies, no ordinary instructions can be sufficient. Nevertheless, you will perceive the general spirit which is indicated by my observations to Her Majesty's Consuls in European Turkey, and let that spirit be as far as possible your guide.

The Ottoman Government has sent a large body of troops and an able man to Syria, and it is to be hoped that his exertions, aided by your endeavours, will replace things in at least a tranquil condition. The Great Powers, in conjunction with their ally the Sultan, will adopt any other measures that may

be deemed necessary to attain this end; but you will be careful to observe that the immediate object of Her Majesty's Government, and of all the other Governments acting with it, is to restore order and maintain the Sultan's Government.

It will hereafter be necessary to consider what further measures are necessary to place the Government on a more satisfactory and solid basis, and to guard against a recurrence of those scenes which have struck so fearful a blow at it.

With respect to measures of this description, your counsels and suggestions may be important, and, at all events, I should be glad that you specified to me, at your earliest convenience, what you would recommend as practically calculated to advance the development of the country's resources, to provide for the better security of its inhabitants, and regularize, and render more efficient, its financial administration, as well as to give generally greater force and tone to the executive authority.

I am, &c.
(Signed) H. L. BULWER.

Inclosure 2 in No. 107.

Circular addressed by Sir H. Bulwer to Her Majesty's Consuls in the Ottoman Empire.

Sir,

Therapia, August 6, 1860.

IT is natural that when any occurrences take place in the Turkish Empire, calculated to produce an ill-feeling between the Mussulman and Christian populations, mutual alarm should be engendered. It may often happen that a conflict, arising from local circumstances alone, may have taken place in a particular spot, and that, nevertheless, a feeling, which that conflict has excited, may produce general consequences. Without being able to say that there may not be particular places to which my general observations may not perfectly apply, I am on the whole of opinion that, as a general rule, there is at present no deliberate intention or desire on the part of the Mussulman population in European Turkey to assault the lives or property of the Christian population, and that, as to the Government and the Sultan, nothing could be so contrary to their views or their policy as any outbreak of a religious nature. The danger, in all these cases to apprehend, then, will much depend upon the accidental state of the public mind; if that is agitated or excited, the smallest accident connected with it will take the most extensive proportions, and be productive of the most serious results.

The first duty, consequently, as it seems to me, of a foreign agent, who ought not to be exposed to the passions or prejudices natural to native residents, will be to calm as much as possible mutual and exaggerated suspicions, and to combat as much as possible exaggerated reports.

The ordinary disposition of the idle and the fearful on these occasions is to recount to each other every little tale that may be abroad, and thus by private confidences of individual apprehensions to engender a sort of public and collective sensation of insecurity, which soon pervades all parties.

Thus one set of men arm to protect themselves from the fancied danger from another, and every one dreading that an attack is being meditated by his adversary, some trifling occurrence becomes the commencement of a general outbreak, making the village, town, or district where it occurs the scene of conflict, plunder, and conflagration.

The first and most important duty you can perform, I repeat, then, is to keep your mind unbiased by vague rumours, and be thus able to tranquillize the excited disposition of those who listen to them.

Endeavour quietly to get at the bottom of any story that is circulated; ascertain, if you can, its truth and its author, but do this in a manner as little likely as possible to attract attention, or to make it believed that you give more than due importance to the report, the accuracy of which you are inquiring into.

Encourage your countrymen and those committed to your charge.

Combat any undue tendency on the part of your colleagues to excite alarm.

Try to obtain the confidence of the authorities by placing yourself on the best terms with them, and, whilst you make them clearly understand that you and your Government will hold them responsible for whatever may happen, strengthen by your countenance, as far as possible, their hands for the preservation of order and peace.

Finally, communicate to the Embassy, in the shortest possible space of time, the condition of the district you inhabit, and the conduct and character of the functionaries who are placed there; and the opinions expressed, and the line of conduct pursued by the Consuls of other Powers; and do not fail to point out any cases where you think there is, through foreign agency or otherwise, an evident attempt to promote apprehension, and thereby favour disorder. In doing this I need hardly add, that you should be careful in not allowing any personal predilection to influence your representations.

In conclusion, I may assure you that your conduct at this crisis will be duly watched by me, and my opinion respecting it, whether favourable or the reverse, communicated to Her Majesty's Government.

I am, &c.
(Signed) H. L. BULWER.

Inclosure 3 in No. 107.

Sir H. Bulwer to Consul-General Moore.

Sir,

Therapia, August 8, 1860.

ALTHOUGH I have nothing very particular to say that circumstances will not suggest to yourself, I deem it right to address you a few observations by this opportunity.

The course we wish seen taken in Syria is one of energy and justice. The doubts which lie at the origin of the recent conflicts between the rival tribes and of the Mussulman riots which have succeeded or accompanied them, should be as much as possible cleared up; the principal leaders in, or promoters of them, punished, and there should be no appearance of any one being screened. As to the different Turkish functionaries, there are various degrees of criminality. Those who plundered, murdered, or delivered up persons confided to their charge to plunder, murder, or pillage, are evidently in the most guilty category. Any who connived at, or participated directly or indirectly in the late disturbances have been guilty of a most serious offence, and have equally exposed themselves to the most serious chastisement.

They who failed in energy or activity, and did not do the duty that might have been expected from them from a third class, and should lose their rank and employment, and under certain circumstances be subject even to severer treatment; but care should be taken in following up justice with due severity not to run hastily into the opposite extreme of persecution which would excite and exasperate one party, if it soothed or satisfied the other.

Public tale-bearers and private slanderers are amongst the worst characteristics of the East.

I am also of opinion that whatever is done should be done quickly; both because it will produce a greater effect on the one hand, and be less liable to be too far extended on the other.

As to the question of the Druses and Maronites, it will have to be examined into by the Commissioners of the Five Powers.

It has always, I confess, appeared to me that the commencement of the recent struggle arose from the Maronites. They seemed excited and filled with ideas of conquest and French protection; these provoking a contest destined to be so fatal to them. I am also rather of opinion that the attitude taken by some foreign agents, and the overbearing spirit too much manifested by them, had no small share in producing the state of feeling that recently manifested itself in so horrible a manner in one portion of Syria, and exists throughout it.

It would also appear from intelligence given to me here, and from letters

and pamphlets that have been intercepted, that there has been a system for some time at work of exciting Christians against Mussulmans, and Mussulmans against Christians, by arousing their mutual apprehensions, and though it would be probably unjust to say that foreign Governments have encouraged such a system, there is reason to believe that foreigners have participated in it.

Whatever you can say upon this point, I should wish you to communicate to me unreservedly.

You are perhaps aware that a proposal was made at the outset of the insurrection to employ Egyptian troops in Syria. Has anything you have observed led to the supposition that an Egyptian intervention was looked to, or do you trace the hand of the Viceroy amongst any of the causes of the Syrian troubles? I observe in some of your despatches and in those of others, that there is a suspicion expressed of the Porte having encouraged the late proceedings. Some of its agents may possibly have done this, though the fact seems at first sight improbable; but you may rest assured that neither Aali nor Fuad Pasha are either so wicked or so stupid as to have dabbled in such designs, and a contrary belief should, if it exists, be discouraged.

I quite understand that in the neighbourhood of scenes such as those which have recently caused so much distress, the mind must be prone to strong impressions. I would wish you also not to give too easy credence to exaggerated stories of plots and massacres; fear on one side engenders it on another; and when two opposite parties exist, each fearing the designs of the other—even without cause—the smallest incident produces strife. Prophets not unfrequently by the zeal with which they preach their predictions provide for their fulfilment. But I speak here evidently on imperfect information. You will be aware that a foreign intervention in which the land force will consist of French troops has been for some time on the tapis, and is now indeed certain to take place. I should wish to know what feeling you think such an intervention will immediately produce, and what you also imagine will be its permanent effects. It will probably be limited both as to time and troops and circle of action.

It would interest me to learn whether you think that an English land-force should be employed as well as a French one, and the causes which you have for any opinion you may entertain on this subject.

I am, &c.
(Signed) H. L. BULWER.

Inclosure 4 in No. 107.

Sir H. Bulwer to Consul Brant.

Sir,

Therapia, August 8, 1860.

I HAVE read your various despatches up to that of the 23rd ultimo, and beg to express my deep sympathy, both on account of the position in which you are now placed and the sufferings and dangers you have already undergone, and it would be a gratification to me if my cordial approval of your conduct should afford you any satisfaction.

During the trying scenes in which you were placed, it seems to me indeed that you acted both with calm and courage, and though it is true that you did not apprehend the likelihood of those calamities which occurred as strongly as some of your colleagues, I am by no means convinced that if all those colleagues had shown an equally tranquil demeanour with yourself, that that general excitement which made a trifling disturbance swell into a riot of so fearful a description, would have been produced.

Such excitement at all events usually ends by arousing the passions of the most violent party, and paralyzing, when peril really arrives, the energies of the weaker or more moderate one. Hence one of the causes which, in crises like the recent one, makes Governments hesitate and mobs triumph.

The conduct of Achmet Pasha, nevertheless, seems to have been wholly indefensible; for he does not appear to have made any personal effort of any kind to quell the disorder which an idle bravado of his own—the setting some Mussulman boys to sweep the streets of the Christian quarter—actually called

forth. He will, however, be sent to Damascus for trial; and it is to be hoped that we shall then be able to ascertain fully the extent of his criminality.

It is to be remembered that he was dissatisfied with the Porte, and may, in a certain degree, have been actuated by a desire to show the truth of the apprehensions he expressed, when the force at his command was seriously diminished.

Such feelings may have consequently led him into a more culpable indifference to the insurrection that took place, or even into a more culpable understanding with its promoters, than would otherwise be likely. At all events, justice should be exercised with stern severity; but, at the same time, justice should not run hastily into persecution, nor a whole class, on something like positive proof, be made accountable for the acts of a particular set of ruffians.

I lay some stress upon this, because, if a religious conflict between Mussulmans and Christians were once excited in Syria, it might extend far beyond the precincts of that province, and give rise to calamities which it would be impossible to control, and even difficult to avenge.

For my own part, it seems to me that the war between the Maronites and Druses is to be looked upon as an affair apart. Examples might be found even of the horrors which characterized it whenever similar conflicts have taken place between hostile and warlike tribes placed in the same position of hereditary antagonism.

The Mahometan feeling which manifested itself against the Christians is, however, another question. Its depth, extent, and the causes which produced it, or at least produced the manifestation of it in the town of Damascus, form a subject on which I should be glad to have your well-considered opinion. The conduct of foreign agents, your colleagues, is, likewise, a matter on which I shall desire to have the result of your important judgment. The great point in all these cases is to determine what was the result of unpremeditated accident—what of premeditated design.

It is to be hoped that the measures pursued by Fuad Pasha, who is a man of tact, courage, and even genius, will produce the effect which I desire to see brought about by them.

This Pasha is a man, however, rather fond of temporary expedients than of uncompromising action; and this portion of his character may, perhaps, interfere with his taking any clear and decided course in cases where clearness and decision may peremptorily be required. Should this defect become apparent in his proceedings, it will be your duty to endeavour to counteract it.

On the other hand, his general wish to conciliate may at a proper moment have a most beneficial tendency; but order must be restored, and authority established, before a system of conciliation can, I fear, be effectually adopted. Thus everything will depend upon doing the right thing at the right time.

You are aware that foreign intervention is decided upon. The manner in which it will be exercised must depend upon circumstances; but as it cannot be permanent, and as, moreover, it aims at the restoration of the Sultan's authority, it is to be desired that that end should be borne in view; and that, as the great evil which has lately attended the Ottoman rule in Syria, and, indeed, the Ottoman rule throughout Turkey, is its weakness; whatever is done now, whether by foreign intervention, or otherwise, should be done with the object of permanently and ultimately removing that weakness, and placing the future Government of the country on a more solid and satisfactory basis than that on which it has lately, or perhaps I should rather say, than that on which it has ever as yet rested.

I am, &c.
(Signed) H. L. BULWER.

*Lord J. Russell to Consul-General Moore.**

Sir,

Foreign Office, August 17, 1860.

IN consequence of the late deplorable events in Syria, Her Majesty's Government have, in conjunction with those of the other Great Powers, decided on sending Commissioners to that country to investigate its origin and causes, to determine the share of responsibility incurred by the chiefs of the insurrection and the agents of the administration, and to call for the punishment of the guilty.

Lord Dufferin has been appointed to act as Her Majesty's Commissioner on the present occasion, and I have accordingly to instruct you to furnish his Lordship with every information and assistance which may contribute to the success of his Mission.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 108*.

Résumé of Despatches from Fuad Pasha.—(Communicated to Lord J. Russell by M. Musurus, August 18.)

A SON arrivée à Beyrouth, son Excellence Fuad Pacha, informé qu'en conséquence des événements de Syrie il y avait quelques signes d'inquiétude dans les villes situées sur le littoral depuis St. Jean d'Acre jusqu'à Alexandrie, a envoyé à St. Jean d'Acre le Vice-Amiral Mustapha Pacha, tandis qu'il a ordonné à Khourchid Pacha, Gouverneur de Saïda, de se rendre à l'autre côté du littoral. Mustapha Pacha, après avoir fait une enquête dans les villes de Saïda, de Sour, et de St. Jean d'Acre, a rejoint Fuad Pacha, lui a donné des renseignements rassurants sur la tranquillité de ces localités, et lui a rendu compte de toutes les mesures qui, à la suite de son enquête, ont été prises pour raffermir l'ordre et la sécurité publique.

Fuad Pacha rapporte que, quoiqu'il n'y eût en aucune plainte contre Khourchid Pacha, soit de la part des indigènes, soit de la part des étrangers, il a pensé que le changement de ce Gouverneur-Général produirait un bon effet moral. Quant à Ahmed Pacha, ex-Muchir de l'armée d'Arabistan, comme dans l'interrogatoire auquel il avait été soumis, il n'a pu présenter des explications suffisantes pour justifier la conduite qu'il avait tenue pendant les événements du Mont Liban et de Damas, il a été envoyé à Constantinople sous garde, et après que le sabre lui a été arraché. Mais le Gouvernement Impérial l'a renvoyé en Syrie pour être jugé par le Conseil de Guerre qui y sera institué, et subir sa punition dès qu'il aura été reconnu coupable.

Fuad Pacha informe la Sublime Porte que, parmi les officiers des troupes de Hasbeya, de Rasheya, et de Deir-el-Kamar, il a déjà fait emprisonner dans la caserne de Beyrouth les Caïmacams Osman Bey et Abdussélam Bey et quatre Majors pour être mis en jugement.

Le Gouvernement Impérial est sur le point de transmettre à Fuad Pacha l'ordre d'exécuter immédiatement et avec fermeté les peines qui auront été prononcées contre ces officiers suivant le degré de culpabilité de chacun, d'arrêter et de juger ceux parmi les troupes sur lesquels pèseraient des soupçons, de destituer Khourchid Pacha, enfin d'arrêter son Kéhaya, ainsi qu'Ahmed Effendi, compagnon de ce dernier, et de leur faire subir un interrogatoire et un jugement sévères.

Fuad Pacha ajoute qu'il a institué trois Commissions, l'une à Beyrouth, l'autre à Saïda, et la troisième à Sour, dans le but de subvenir à la subsistance et aux besoins les plus urgents des pauvres, des orphelins, et des veuves dont les maisons ont été incendiées et les parents massacrés; qu'il a fixé 100 paras par jour pour chacun de ces individus pour leur nourriture; que les susdites Commissions sont composées de Musulmans et de Chrétiens de ces trois villes; qu'un

* Similar despatches were also addressed to Her Majesty's Consuls at Aleppo, Damascus, and Jerusalem.

hôpital est destiné à ceux qui ont reçu des blessures à l'occasion des tristes événements du Liban, et que les médecins ont déjà commencé à soigner les blessés.

Fuad Pacha a publié une déclaration promettant que les jeunes gens qui sont restés sans parents et sans subsistance seront envoyés à Constantinople pour être admis dans les Ecoles Impériales.

Khourchid Effendi, un des employés de son Excellence Fuad Pacha, a été envoyé à Jérusalem pour donner au Gouverneur des instructions de vive voix et par écrit, et lui remettre une copie des ordres du jour adressés aux troupes Impériales.

Songeant à l'effet que les événements de Syrie ont pu produire à Alep, Fuad Pacha a écrit au Gouverneur pour l'inviter à prendre les mesures de précaution nécessaires, en même temps qu'il a transmis au Général de Division Hafiz Pacha l'ordre de se rendre à Alep avec les troupes qu'il emmènera du corps d'armée d'Anatolie.

Les honnêtes gens et les hommes de considération parmi les Musulmans de Syrie ont prêté une grande assistance aux Chrétiens, et leur ont témoigné par des faits des sentiments d'humanité et de sympathie.

No. 109.

Mr. Fane to Lord J. Russell.—(Received August 20.)

(No. 45.)

My Lord,

Vienna, August 16, 1860.

COUNT RECHBERG informed me yesterday that he had just received from the Marquis de Moustier a draft of identic instructions which the French Government propose should be simultaneously addressed by the several Powers to their Commissioners appointed to investigate the condition of affairs in Syria.

These instructions, as far as I could judge from a very hasty perusal, are of a broad and general character. The last paragraph, if my verbal memory be correct, is couched as nearly as possible in terms analogous to the following: "You will communicate with the Representative of your Government at Constantinople on all matters that may be of interest to him, and you will receive from him such communications as he may judge fit to address to you."

Count Rechberg said that from information which he had received from Paris he was led to believe that Her Majesty's Government had desired that the instructions to be furnished to the Commissioners should be addressed to them not directly by their respective Governments, but by their Representatives at Constantinople. He was not sufficiently informed to know whether the paragraph to which I have above alluded had been drawn up in deference to the wishes of Her Majesty's Government, and whether they were inclined to agree to the draft which embodied it. He was, however, most anxious to act in unison with your Lordship upon all questions relating to Eastern Affairs, and he should therefore be most glad, before giving any reply to the French proposal, to be informed of the opinion of Her Majesty's Government relative to the draft of instructions which had been submitted to him, and which had, of course, been transmitted also to London.

He would therefore beg me to apply to your Lordship for such information by telegraph.

I promised Count Rechberg that I would at once give effect to his wishes, and I did so by addressing to your Lordship a telegram upon this subject yesterday afternoon.

Count Rechberg said briefly that his reasons for inclining to the belief that the Commissioners' instructions had better be drawn up and addressed to them by the respective Governments and not by their Representatives at Constantinople, were based on the reflection that the conflicting jealousies and intrigues which were always rife in that capital would render the adoption of an identic draft of instructions by all the Ambassadors a matter of difficult achievement.

I have, &c.

(Signed) JULIAN FANE.

No. 110.

Lord Bloomfield to Lord J. Russell.—(Received August 20.)

(No. 308.)

My Lord,

Berlin, August 18, 1860.

THE French Chargé d'Affaires has communicated to this Government the draft of an identic instruction which it is proposed to address to the Commissioners of the Great Powers in Syria. A copy of this paper has been taken to Ostend by Baron Schleinitz; and I understand from M. de Gruner, the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, that he was not aware that his Government intended suggesting any alteration in it; he considered it was very elastic and adapted to the circumstances under which the Commissioners would commence their labours.

I did not learn from M. de Gruner that any person had yet been selected to act as Prussian Commissioner in Syria.

I have, &c.

(Signed) BLOOMFIELD.

No. 111.

Lord Bloomfield to Lord J. Russell.—(Received August 20.)

(No. 313. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Berlin, August 18, 1860.

BEFORE leaving Berlin Baron Schleinitz stated to me, in the strictest confidence, that there was a question of Prussia sending a small military expedition of 3,000 men to co-operate with the allied forces in Syria, and that it would give him most sincere pleasure if such an expedition could be combined with a like number of men to be supplied from Her Majesty's Army. He said that he had spoken to the Ministers of War and of Finance, and that he thought the project feasible and deserving of the best consideration of his Government, and that, moreover, in a political sense he highly approved of it, but that there were many difficulties in the way of its execution; and that it was most regrettable that Prussia had not, in consequence of their expedition to Japan, a single man-of-war available at this moment to serve as an escort to the transports that would be required to carry troops to the coast of Syria.

Since Baron Schleinitz's departure I have seen Mr. Scott Russell, who has been applied to by the Prussian Government for information as to the facilities that he could obtain for them in England in the way of transports, and after having been some days in communication with the Prussian Admiralty, he leaves Berlin for Ostend this evening to concert further with the Prince Regent and Baron Schleinitz.

I have, &c.

(Signed) BLOOMFIELD.

No. 112.

Consul Brant to Lord J. Russell.—(Received August 22.)

(No. 11.)

My Lord,

Damascus, July 28, 1860.

I HAVE the honor to report to your Lordship that I have learned to-day that a report at Beyrout, as to French troops coming to Syria, has become known here, and that, in consequence, persons of the higher classes have declared that if the Europeans land troops they will unite with all the Mussulmans to massacre every Christian throughout Syria. I cannot help thinking, that even were foreign troops to land, the threat would not be executed; still it would not be safe to trust to that opinion. If it were resolved to land troops, I think that, in order to prevent excitement, British had better precede French, and that a Firman were published previously throughout Syria, to the effect that the Sultan had solicited the assistance of his Allies to restore order in

Syria, in co-operation with his own troops, that he ordered the allied forces to be received as His Majesty's friends and guests, to be supplied with everything necessary, and directing the Governors to collect wheat, and barley, and straw for the use of His Majesty's army and that of his Allies. This would prevent, I should hope, any slaughter of the Christians on the first news reaching, and the troops once in Damascus, Aleppo, and Jerusalem, danger would have ceased, and everything desired could be effected quietly. I do not imagine that the Sultan would refuse to co-operate in this way to allay excitement, but it would be well that the Embassy should dictate the language to be used, or at any rate ascertain that it clearly expressed the Ambassador's intentions. The people of Syria believe in the good wishes of England towards their Sultan, but they do not trust implicitly the French; it were therefore more prudent that France were not in the first instance put prominently forward.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JAS. BRANT.

No. 113.

Consul-General Moore to Lord J. Russell.—(Received August 22.)
(No. 26.)

My Lord,

Beyrout, August 1, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to report that, on the 30th ultimo, I called a meeting of the Consuls, at the request of Count Bentivoglio, who wished to make to us a communication of importance. For the purport of M. Bentivoglio's statement, I beg leave to refer your Lordship to the inclosed copy of a circular I addressed in consequence to Her Majesty's Consuls in Syria.

I have the honour to inclose, for your Lordship's perusal, the copy of a letter which I have received from Mr. Cyril Graham, containing the last news from Damascus. Your Lordship will perceive that Mr. Graham estimates the number of Christians massacred at 4,000 to 5,000. The French and Prussian Consuls, however, raise the figure to 6,000. Although Fuad Pasha's arrival at Damascus is not mentioned in this letter, it is known from other sources that his Excellency entered the city early on Sunday morning the 29th ultimo. It is further stated that the European Consuls at Damascus had begged the Pasha not to proceed to the infliction of punishment on the Mahometan populace before taking measures to ensure the protection and safety of the remaining Christians against a second attempt at insurrection, and that Fuad Pasha had visited the Castle, and showed the strongest emotion at the sight of the 12,000 Christian refugees congregated in it. In reply to those who expressed themselves desirous of leaving Damascus for the sea coast he offered a Government escort, of which about 1,000 individuals were about to avail themselves.

The news of the approaching arrival of French troops has naturally caused great agitation amongst the Mahometan populace of this place. A deputation of them waited upon the Acting Governor yesterday, and desired to be informed whether these troops were coming with the permission of the Porte or not. Mustapha Pasha received the deputation coldly, and refused to give them an answer. This did not tend to allay their excited feelings.

In the Lebanon, notwithstanding the conclusion of peace, the Druses persevere in isolated acts of murder and pillage. I am informed, on credible authority, that they have sent all their plunder, valuables, and effects to the Hauran and Ledja, and are ready to make a move *en masse* to those fastnesses on the first indication of approaching danger to their nation, whether from foreign or Turkish attack. The Christians are still massed in the Kesrouan.

Admiral Martin has despatched men-of-war north and south, along the coast, for the protection of British interests and Christians. The Commander-in-chief has placed forty sacks of biscuit (of 112 lbs. each) at the disposal of the Committee for the relief of distressed Christian fugitives, as a contribution on the part of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. MOORE.

P.S.—I inclose copy of my despatch of this date to Sir Henry Bulwer.

Inclosure 1 in No. 113.

Circular addressed by Consul-General Moore to Her Majesty's Consuls in Syria.

Sir,

Beyrout, July 30, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to acquaint you that Count Bentivoglio, the French Consul-General here, requested me this morning to convoke a meeting of the Consuls, to whom he desired to make a communication of importance.

Having assembled my colleagues, M. Bentivoglio informed us that the French Colonel d'Etat-Major D'Osmond, had arrived last night at Beyrout from Marseilles, bringing the intelligence that a French division of 12,000 men were about to embark for Syria,—6,000 to come at once, and the remaining 6,000 to follow,—and that he himself had been ordered to precede the division to prepare for their reception. The Porte had been apprised of this measure by the French Government, but M. Bentivoglio was not aware whether the sanction of the Turkish Government had been obtained, which, however, was to be supposed. M. D'Osmond also states that he heard that the French division was to be accompanied by 4,000 English troops. Of this, however, neither Admiral Martin nor myself have received intelligence, which may arrive by the mail due to-morrow.

The meeting proceeded to consider the position of our respective Consuls and countrymen in the interior, and it was resolved that the news should be communicated to the Consuls with the least possible delay; leaving them to act as their own judgment and better local knowledge might dictate.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. MOORE.

Inclosure 2 in No. 113.

Mr. Graham to Consul-General Moore.

My dear Sir,

Damascus, July 30, 1860.

I TOLD you in my last letter of Thursday that the city was not so quiet as we could wish. On Friday the excitement was even greater, and on Saturday a plot had been made to attack the Consulates. Early on that morning, Migwel of Anazi received information from his private friends that he had better pack up and hide his valuables, as it was likely a general outbreak would take place in the course of the day.

I went about; all the shops were closed, and at 11 at night there were several shots fired. The military Pasha, however, ordered the guards to be doubled, and himself rode all night about the town. He sent us that night thirty of the new Turkish troops, instead of the rascals who had before been keeping guard, and who had been among the herds of Hasbeya. The heat is very great now, and I fear unless the Christians soon be removed, they will have to leave their bones here, for some frightful pestilence cannot but break out soon. There are 12,000 in the Castle, exposed to heat, and scarcely fed. I went to see them, and passed through them, but with tremendous difficulty. I was nearly torn to pieces. The Moslems all say that should any European force attempt to land every Christian here shall be slain. Their great cry is against the Consuls.

We shall see what Fuad does; for the moment there is a lull, but should he, from fear or other causes, show the little energy he did at Beyrout, all is over.

It was unpardonable of him keeping the Seraskier on the road; we were in great danger on Saturday, and I honestly began to think that another affair of Deir-el-Kamar had been planned, and the Seraskier was to arrive after the slaughter was over. The Moslems began to think that it was intended as an encouragement to them.

I shall go about every day, and give you as much information as I can.

Of one thing be assured, if (this is, of course, *entre nous*) the French are alarmists, Mr. Brant looks upon the whole in far too calm a light.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CYRIL C. GRAHAM.

Inclosure 3 in No. 113.

Consul-General Moore to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, August 1, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Excellency's despatches No. 13 and No. 14, in the former of which you are pleased to approve of the joint note addressed by the Consuls of the Great Powers to Khoorshid Pasha.

With reference to No. 14, authorizing me on the part of Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to subscribe 200*l.* in the name of Her Majesty's Government for the relief of distressed Christian refugees, I have the honour to state that I have complied with your Excellency's instruction.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. MOORE.

No 114.

Consul-General Moore to Lord J. Russell.—(Received August 22.)

(No. 27.)

My Lord,

Beyrout, August 4, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to report that instructions from the Porte have been received by the Turkish Authorities relative to the approaching arrival of French troops in Syria. A proclamation to that effect, qualifying this measure of the French Government as one undertaken with the knowledge and sanction of the Porte, and calling upon the people to receive the French as Allies and guests, has been published here by the Acting Governor. I beg to inclose a translation of the document. This announcement relieves to a great extent the anxieties which had been felt in the hitherto prevailing uncertainty with regard to the character of the expedition, as to the possible consequences of the arrival of foreign troops. Still it is not to be doubted that their coming will be looked upon with disfavour and suspicion by the Mahometans, Authorities as well as people. The contrary would be the case were the expedition English, whilst a joint occupation by the two Powers would greatly modify the feeling of aversion.

French officers and men connected with the expedition and stores have arrived. Besides Colonel d'Osmond, an officer of the Commissariat, or "Intendant," and about thirty private soldiers have reached Beyrout. The soldiers landed yesterday, and are preparing the camping ground outside the town. The establishment of the French Sisters of Charity has been prepared as an hospital for the troops.

I have accounts from Damascus to the 2nd instant. Fuad Pasha had not yet done anything remarkable. I have been put in possession of the translation of a letter written by a Mahometan at Damascus to a friend of his here; I beg to inclose a copy of the translation. The letter is interesting on account of its authorship, besides the melancholy interest it possesses as a narrative of what took place. I also transmit a translation of the statement from the Greek Catholic Bishop of Baalbec, referred to in my despatch No. 25 of 28th ultimo.

I am happy to be able to report to your Lordship that I have been instrumental in rescuing over 100 Christians, mostly women and children, and considerable property belonging to plundered Christians. On learning on two separate occasions that there was such a number of unfortunate creatures still hiding or detained by the Druses in the neighbourhood of the spot where Deir-el-Kamar once stood, I sent my cavasses, whom I induced the Turkish

Authorities to accompany with some horsemen on their part to the spot, with letters to the Druse Chiefs. The cavasses both times succeeded in bringing the poor creatures safely down to Beyrout, to the number above stated.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. MOORE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 114.

Proclamation.

(Translation.)

REPORTS have been prevalent of the coming to Beyrout of French troops. This matter had been submitted to us by the French Consul and the Colonel d'Osmond, who is charged to look for accommodations for the troops in question, through the medium of the Local Government. The said Colonel had verbally reported his mission. We, not knowing whether the Sublime Porte had assented to the coming of the said troops or not, hastened to submit a detailed report on the subject to his Excellency the Foreign Minister, Fuad Pasha, who is an independent and supreme authority in all matters relating to the affairs of this country, begging to be furnished with instructions on the subject. It has been plainly understood, from the contents of the high reply of his Excellency, that the said matter has been made known to him by letters which his Excellency has received from the Porte by Kasim Bay, Aide-de-camp to the Admiralty, as the sending of French troops has been offered by the French Government to the Sublime Porte, an offer occasioned by the illegal and inhuman proceedings which have occurred, namely, the treacherous assassination and plundering, by certain low people of Damascus, of the Christian subjects of the Porte. It is hoped, that before the arrival of these troops, the disorders will have been entirely suppressed, and dealt with according to the requirements of law and justice, under the auspices of His Majesty our Sultan, supported by the aid of God and of his Prophet, and through the unanimous co-operation of the faithful and respectable subjects of the Porte, and that no occasion will remain for employing the said troops. It is not ignored that the coming of the troops on the part of the French Government results from true and close friendship existing between the two Governments, and these troops will not make the slightest movement within the Turkish Empire without the concurrence of the functionaries of the Sublime Porte. There is, therefore, no occasion to fear, on account of the arrival of these troops, but, as ordained in the reply of his Excellency the Foreign Minister, the functionaries of the Imperial Government are to exert themselves to facilitate their requirements, and give them the necessary assistance agreeably to the laws of hospitality.

In order that all classes should know the above, and be free from all anxieties, we hasten to make it public, that every one may be occupied in his own affairs and concerns.

Muharrem 16, 1277.

Inclosure 2 in No. 114.

Letter from a Turkish Moslem in Damascus.

(Translated from the Turkish.)

May the most merciful God take vengeance!

THE sole cause which stirred up the people of Damascus and of the villages to bring about the insurrection described below is this:—That before the breaking out of this wickedness, by twenty days, some of the worthless fellows and baser people had been appointed, by the order of Government and the decision of the Chief Consul of Damascus, to be Police Captains and Officers and Policemen, and, thereupon, these persons, being themselves the chiefs of the sedition, collected a number of the lowest and basest fellows, and

commenced supplying them with arms, and as they were appointed to guard the Christian quarter, this circumstance incited the thoughts of the Damascenes to preparation for this work (the rising), whereas, otherwise, no one would have thought of the occurrence of such a sad event as this.

On Monday, the 27th of June, o.s., 1860 (July 9th, n.s.), at about 2 o'clock p.m., some boys made crosses in every section of the city, and began to cause the passers-by to tread upon them, and otherwise to insult the Christians, and the making of these crosses and these insults were not of such a nature as would naturally occur to these boys, but they must have been instructed by some of the leaders of the sedition. After half-an-hour the report of the affair of the crosses, and of the audacity manifested in insulting and humiliating the Christians had, by some means or other, reached the Government, and immediately the Chief of the Police, with some of his men, went forth and seized a part of the boys and other persons and sent them to the Government, when they were put in chains, and sent forth to the market to sweep the streets, and they actually began sweeping. Then there gathered around them the Moslems of the neighbourhood, and rescued these boys from the police, and broke off the chains from their feet and cast them away; and, as soon as the boys were let free, all the shops of the whole market (bazaars) were closed within the space of five or ten minutes, and in a quarter of an hour two cannons were fired, and from that time arms began to be fired. The traitor, Selim Agha, of the Medan, an officer (Boulik Basha), of the irregular troops, took with him an immense number of the worst people of the Medan, armed, and led them at once to the Christian quarter, and, as soon as he entered that quarter, immediately fell upon the houses of such Christians as he previously had his eye upon, and, breaking open the doors, he and his companions set about plundering, and burning, and killing; and, inasmuch as the wretch alluded to had under his command a larger number of armed villains, no one was able to get the start of them in carrying off the most choice and valuable of the plunder.

True, the people of the villages surrounding Damascus, and the Arabs and Druses, came in crowds to the city after some hours, and filled it; and they also plundered much, and were fierce in shedding blood and burning. But the assembling and agreement, and union and concert, and purpose of all the people of Damascus, with the villagers and Arabs, in the space of an hour, for the accomplishment of this sedition in Damascus, could not have occurred without some previous determination on the part of their leading men. And that this was the case is made clear as day by the circumstance, that, within the space of five or ten minutes, white and green banners were displayed, from prominent positions, on all the Moslem houses, no one forbidding; and is it possible that, at such an evil time, such a procedure should occur to any one without his having been previously prepared for it? The city guards and irregular troops that had been enrolled and officered by the order of the Great Council of the city, professedly for the protection of the Christian quarter, they were the ones who first began plundering, and burning, and killing. Had these city police, and people of the Medan who were enrolled as guards, kept the heads of the streets leading to the Christian quarter, and bolted the gates of the quarter, and fired upon the invaders, and endeavoured to turn them back and prevent them from entering the Christian quarter, like the regular troops, the affair would not have arrived at such a pass, but would probably have been soon stopped. Had the members of the Great Council, and the leading men and principal persons of the town, proceeded at that time to the Christian quarter, nothing whatever would have occurred: whereas, in these circumstances, no one of the aforementioned members and leading men said to any one, "desist;" and from this it is evident that this calamity which has fallen upon the heads of the poor Christians, upon their property, their houses, their children, and their wives, was by previous intent of the leading men, as was, moreover, apparent from all the indications manifest in their conduct. Many of the Christians concealed themselves in their houses, and were consumed in the flames; and many of them, after having been subjected to severe tortures, in order that they might disclose the places where their property was concealed, were butchered within their houses after making such disclosures, lest they should afterwards enter complaint. And many of the women from whom they could not draw their

their bracelets quickly had their hands cut off, as were likewise the fingers of many who had rings which could not easily be removed; and they were not satisfied with this, but killed and destroyed many of them. And there were many women also not able to remove their ear-rings from their ears, who had their ears torn open or cut off in consequence. Some of the Christians were taken out by the followers of Abd-el-Kader, the Algerine, from the wells and other places where they had concealed themselves, and while they were being conveyed to the Castle, they were fired upon and wounded by bullets. His Excellency Abd-el-Kader, abovementioned, took a large number of the Christians to his own house, and saved them, and his men also saved a great number, and took them to the Castle; and in that distress there was no one but he and his followers who made any effort to save the Christians. It is true that some persons among the Moslems took from the Christian quarter a few men, women, and children, and conveyed them to their houses; and they also took some persons to their houses from the castle, asking the privilege of taking them as though they had merciful intentions towards them: but, alas for these poor people! what harm and torture they inflicted upon them in their houses, in order to make them disclose the places where they had concealed their property, and how many acts of wicked violence were inflicted upon them! and, on the morrow, they would return a part of them to the Castle, and kill a part, while others were compelled to become Moslems. And many vile persons took from the Castle a number of women and children without giving surety for them, and, as soon as they got them outside the Castle gates, they chose out the youngest of them, and left the older in the street. I was present in the Castle on that day, and saw persons of the lowest class picking out children, whom they took away, without any one saying to them, what are you doing? They opened the Armenian, Greek, and Catholic churches, carried off the vessels, and killed the priests, and then burned the churches. They plundered the Russian Consulate, and burned it. The Consul is at present in the Government Palace, but the Consulates of England and France were not touched, as they were in the Moslem quarter. There were in the Custom-house about 200 Christians at that time, and I immediately went in haste to the Palace, and brought some of the regular soldiers and took them away, and thus I secured the salvation of these poor people. Those Christian houses which were in Moslem quarters were also burned, after they had been plundered of everything in them. The number of such houses was about 300.

On the 9th of July, o.s. (21st, n.s.), Khaled Pasha, the Military Governor, in accordance with the decision of the Great Council, commenced sending to the Christian quarter, and taking out the property concealed there, forbidding any to enter excepting those thus employed; and some of the Christians who were in the Castle also obtained permits to go to the Christian quarter and search for whatever might be found in their burned houses. Three days since, a few of the Christians began to issue out into the streets nearest the Castle, but it was reported that a Christian was killed yesterday near the Kaimarée. On the day of the outbreak they took the bell of one of the churches and placed it in an inverted position on the middle of the cross, which has been, from ancient times, lying under foot in the street of the Emwéh Mosque. On the day of this affair, and the following night, the gates of the city remained unclosed, that there might be no obstacle to the removal of the plunder to the houses of the plunderers. And after the dwelling-houses of the Christians were finished, their shops also were broken open, and the goods carried off in the night. Many of the Sheiks and Ulemas, and principal men, disguised themselves and plundered in the Christian quarter, and, in short, no one in Damascus refrained from plundering the property of the Christians, not even the old women.

This record, having been written in haste, some circumstances have been omitted, and the names of some well known persons, whose deeds might have been recorded. If you wish, I can inform you of these hereafter.

Inclosure 3 in No. 114.

The Bishop of Baalbeck to Consul-General Moore.

(Translation.)

Gebbet-Bshané, July 19, 1860.

I MUST acquaint you, Sir, with the disasters that have befallen me personally and the Christian population of my diocese, including the churches and convents in the district of Baalbeck. After the barbarous hordes had vanquished, pillaged, and burnt the town of Zahlé, the Metualis and Moslems of the district of Baalbeck arose in arms, and in their ferocious hatred against the Christians killed them, pillaging their property and burning their houses and churches, and carrying away the cattle and crops. After prosecuting this work of destruction in the villages, they came to the town of Baalbeck, the seat of the Governor, who, notwithstanding the presence of Hussin Bey, the Colonel commanding a regiment of regular Imperial troops, a battalion of cavalry, and two guns; did not evince any disposition to defend the rayahs from the attacks of the enemy. Secondly, in the interval, the Emirs of Harfoosh, outlaws by order of the Ottoman Government, placed themselves at the head of a body of brigands, and attacked by surprise the Civil Governor, Farès Agha Kadro, with the intention of killing him, they did not succeed except in killing some of his retainers. The Turkish troops in garrison did not oppose these lawless bands, nor take any step to protect the helpless Christian community amidst these great perils, but remained passive spectators.

3rdly. When I found myself surrounded by danger, both from without and from within, I took to flight with some of my flock, leaving behind all our property, household furniture, and wearing apparel, not having had even time to take the necessary food for the day.

4thly. On arriving, by the help of God, safely to the town of Bsharré, in the Lebanon, the news reached me that Hassan Agha Yazigee had arrived at Baalbeck at the head of 400 irregular troops, styled "Albanians," whom he had enrolled among the lawless class of Damascenes, chiefly Kurds, notorious for their licentiousness, with the ostensible object of protecting the population of Baalbeck, but it soon turned out that this Agha and his wicked troops were the greatest scourge to the Christians who had remained at their homes. On learning the barbarities committed by the Mussulmans of Damascus against the Christians, he, the chief, let loose his troops, who attacked our church and residence of our Bishopric, and the houses of the Christians in general, pillaged the property, and destroyed the rest, and defiled the house of God in a horrible manner, killed some men, and violated the women and children that fell in their way, subsequently killing them. Up to this time a great number of them are dispersed in the wilderness, others kept by the enemies, and the rest have abjured Christianity and embraced Islamism to save their lives.

5thly. The calamity that befell the Christians in the town of Baalbeck soon extended to those of the surrounding villages in the district. The Mussulmans and Metualis, with Harfoosh Emirs at their head, attacked the Christians, killed and pillaged, sacked and burnt the churches and the houses to the last of them. We see daily arriving our dispersed flock and their pastors, needy, naked, afflicted, and destitute not only of their wearing apparel, household furniture, their cattle and harvest, but some without their wives and children. Many are still hidden in the wilderness and in caves, and their place of refuge not yet ascertained.

6thly. The above brief narrative will show how much Christian blood has been shed in these attacks; how many women and children carried away, what amount of property pillaged, churches sacked and burned in the district of Baalbeck, amounting to upwards of twenty churches, of which twelve churches and two convents, namely, Deir Gazal and Seydet-er-Ras, belonging to our own community, where three priests were killed.

7thly. The amount of property pillaged and destroyed is 500 purses, the same amount arising from the destruction of the twelve churches already mentioned, and the two convents, the property of which alone amounted to 200 purses, making a total of 1,700 purses. The amount of the property of our lay community pillaged is estimated at about 5,000 purses, and that of the other Christian communities in the whole of the district, consisting of household

property, crops, cattle, camels, horses, donkeys, and houses destroyed by fire, &c., exceeds 20,000 purses. This is the pecuniary loss, exclusive of that of men, women, honour, desecration, &c.

I feel it my duty to submit this protest to you, Sir, beseeching and entreating the benevolence and compassion of the exalted Government of England, distinguished for their high zeal and great power, for there remains to us no other refuge after God but them, to bestow a compassionate look upon the deplorable state to which the Christian community is reduced; men, women, and children are now brought to utter destruction, naked and hungry, not possessing the means of daily food. May they take up their cause and obtain for them reparation and indemnity; and gain their prayers and most fervent supplications to the Almighty to afford them victory, and consolidate the foundations of their power, so as to tread under their feet every enemy, and render them gloriously victorious for ever.

I have, &c.
(Signed) MALATHIOS.

No. 115.

Consul-General Moore to Lord J. Russell.—(Received August 22.)

(No. 28.)

My Lord,

Beyrout, August 6, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to inclose the copy of a letter, marked Confidential, which I received yesterday from Fuad Pasha, in which his Excellency is pleased to acquaint me with the measures he had taken at Damascus up to the day of its date. The verbal communication with which the Pasha had charged Hassan Bey (Colonel O'Reilly) to make to me, as stated in the closing paragraph of his Excellency's letter, had reference to the coming of the French expeditionary force, of which he is most anxious to prevent the disembarkation, by showing that he is doing the needful at Damascus, therefore leaving no occasion for the action of the French troops.

This desire on the part of the Imperial Commissioner is natural enough; but it is a question meriting serious consideration how far the vigorous measures already taken, or to be further adopted, by the Turkish authorities, are due to the threat of occupation. In my humble opinion, they are so to a very considerable extent. I called, however, upon Admiral Martin, in order to show him Fuad Pasha's communication, and acquaint him with the nature of the verbal message by Hassan Bey. We could come but to one conclusion as to arresting the progress of the French troops, viz., that independently of the fact of the absence of instructions to us on the subject on the part of our Government, any such attempt with the French Military Commander, who would attend to nothing but his orders, would be futile. I have acquainted Hassan Bey, who started for Damascus immediately afterwards, with our opinion, for the information of Fuad Pasha. Count Bentivoglio having called upon me later in the day, I had an opportunity of ascertaining his views on the subject, without acquainting him with our own, which I found to be in harmony with those we entertained. The French Consul-General had received a letter from Fuad Pasha similar to the one addressed to me by his Excellency. I beg to inclose a copy of my written reply to the Pasha.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. MOORE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 115.

Fuad Pasha to Consul-General Moore.

M. le Consul-Général,

Damas, le 4 Aout, 1860.

J'AI commencé à agir ici, hier, et mon plan a été couronné de succès. Après avoir pris toutes les dispositions pour imposer d'un côté à la ville et pour la frapper de l'autre en cas de résistance, je suis parvenu à faire saisir, jusqu'au

soir, 330 individus; qui m'ont été dénoncés en partie par les agents étrangers et par les Chrétiens et en partie livrés par les indigènes eux-mêmes. Les arrestations continuent encore aujourd'hui, et arriveront jusqu'au soir au nombre de 500. Tout le monde livre le butin criminel, et quoiqu'il soit difficile de faire restituer une grande partie des objets de valeur, la plupart des objets enlevés se trouvent aujourd'hui entre nos mains. Tout cela s'est fait sans coup férir, et la population honnête de la ville a donné une assistance morale, par son calme, à la troupe Impériale; qui du reste a imposé, par son attitude, aux mutins qui se trouvent aujourd'hui sous le coup de la terreur. Il me reste à présent à agir contre les personnes appartenant à la classe supérieure qui ont été compromises dans l'affaire de Damas, que j'ai employées, jusqu'à présent, au succès de mon plan, et qui bientôt seront entre les mains de la justice. Un Conseil Extraordinaire que j'ai déjà nommé vient de commencer à interroger les individus qui sont arrêtés. Ceux qui seront condamnés par ce Tribunal Extraordinaire seront exécutés par la sentence que je donnerai, conformément aux pleins pouvoirs que le Sultan m'a conférés. Cette mesure ainsi que toutes les autres que je prendrai pour infliger un châtiment exemplaire à la ville de Damas ne rencontreront aucune résistance de la part de la population, dont une partie, ainsi que j'ai eu l'honneur de vous le dire plus haut, qui est honnête reste calme, et l'autre est devenue très docile, par les arrestations de ses chefs qui ont été effectuées jusqu'à présent. Sachant d'avance que tout ce que je vous communiquerai vous fera un plaisir particulier et que la relation exacte des faits peut prévenir des complications qui peuvent résulter d'un mouvement de troupes qu'on m'a signalé comme combiné, j'ai cru de mon devoir de porter à votre connaissance tout ce qui s'est passé ici, et j'envoie à Beyrouth mon Aide-de-camp, le Colonel Hassan Bey, pour qu'il vous donne, ainsi qu'à M. l'Amiral Commandant des forces navales de Sa Majesté Britannique devant Beyrouth, des détails sur nos opérations ici et pour qu'il vous fasse de vive voix certaines observations que j'ai cru nécessaires de vous faire parvenir.

Agréer, &c.
(Signé) FUAD.

Inclosure 2 in No. 115.

Consul General Moore to Fuad Pasha.

Excellency,

Beyrouth, August 7, 1860.

I HAVE had the honour to receive the letter which your Excellency has had the goodness to address to me under date of the 4th instant.

In thanking your Excellency for the information which you are pleased to give me relative to the energetic measures you have taken at Damascus, I beg to assure you that you do me but justice in believing that your Excellency's communications will afford me a peculiar pleasure.

With respect to the verbal observations which Colonel Hassan Bey was charged by your Excellency to make to Admiral Martin and myself, I beg to state that I sought a special interview with the Admiral in order to confer with him thereon. The result of our deliberations I have verbally confided to Hassan Bey, to be by him communicated to your Excellency.

I beg, &c.
(Signed) N. MOORE.

No. 116.

Consul-General Moore to Lord J. Russell.—(Received August 22.)

(No. 29.)

My Lord,

Beyrouth, August 6, 1860.

WITH reference to a statement that has appeared in the public papers to the effect that there were but 400 regular troops in Syria at the time of the outbreak, I have the honour to acquaint your Lordship with the truth with regard to that point. Perfect accuracy is not attainable, but your

Lordship may rely that the following estimate is rather understated than the contrary.

In the two Pashalics of Beyrouth and Damascus there could not have been less than 4,000 Turkish regulars at the commencement of the disturbances and before the arrival of any reinforcements whatsoever. At each place in the Mountain where massacres were perpetrated there were garrisons, composed of regulars, ranging from 200 to 600 strong, with field pieces. In Damascus it is computed that there were 1,500 regular troops, cavalry and infantry, and as many irregulars, when the insurrection broke out.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. MOORE.

No. 117.

Consul-General Moore to Lord J. Russell.—(Received August 22.)

(No. 30.)

My Lord,

Beyrouth, August 8, 1860.

I have the honour to report the arrival within the last few days of a Dutch, a Sardinian, an Austrian, and a Russian frigate; a Greek corvette and two gun-boats had come in about ten days.

In addition to Her Majesty's ships already reported, the "Raccoon" frigate entered the port on the 5th instant. There are now before Beyrouth twenty-two vessels of war of the different nations represented, besides the British, French, and Turkish ships detached on service along the coast.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. MOORE.

No. 118.

Major Fraser to Lord J. Russell.—(Received August 22.)

(No. 1.)

My Lord,

Beyrouth, August 2, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to report my arrival at Beyrouth, on the night of the 31st ultimo, in fulfilment of the special mission with which I am entrusted by your Lordship.

Immediately upon my arrival, and at his own request, I waited upon Admiral Martin, commanding Her Majesty's fleet here, whom I at once disabused of the idea that I came in connection with any intended military expedition on the part of England—an idea which I found existed in consequence of the previous arrival of Colonel D'Osmond, a French officer, who is now selecting ground at the "Pine Forest," near Beyrouth, for the encampment of a strong French force, said to be about to arrive in Syria. Believing that such reports were calculated to expose the Christian population yet remaining in Damascus to imminent danger, in the yet uncertain position of affairs there, I have taken upon me to state generally, that I had no knowledge whatever that any force, whether English or French, was likely to arrive in Syria. On seeing Mr. Moore, to whom I delivered your Lordship's instructions regarding myself, I requested him to state to his colleagues, by whom he said inquiry would be made, that I had come in connection with the operation of no body of troops but those of His Majesty the Sultan. I was desirous that this should be distinctly understood, because the idea that an armed intervention by a combined English and French force was imminent, had largely obtained in Beyrouth and neighbourhood, and had even reached Damascus, while Moslems, in various quarters, had threatened that if such occurred, they would exterminate every Christian they could reach. There does not appear to be much feeling against the landing of an English force, particularly if with the consent of the Sultan, but a most marked objection exists to a French intervention. The influence of France appears to have utterly declined among the Maronites, after the severe losses they suffered at the hands of the Druses, brought upon them by the attitude they had been encouraged to assume by their French protectors. Since the report of a French landing, however, which appears to be industriously spread,

both officially and otherwise, the lost ground is being rapidly recovered. Whether intervention be positively decided or not, it is of vital moment that no landing be permitted, until the safety of the Christians in the interior of Syria and Palestine be first provided for, and in the event of the Sultan giving his consent to such intervention, that this fact be first widely made known, otherwise the results to the Christians may be most deplorable; for the little protection they have in the meantime from the presence of the Sultan's troops might then utterly fail them.

The arrival of thirteen French Commissariat officers, by the steamer of this morning, would seem to confirm the reports of the speedy arrival of French troops.

Beyrout is quiet, and the presence of the English and French squadrons, added to a garrison of 2,000 Turkish regulars, under Ismail Pasha (General Kmetz), seems quite sufficient to ensure its continuance. Yet there is a steady emigration of the Christian population going on, who leave coastwards for Alexandria, Smyrna, Greece, or any distant port to which they can get conveyance, stating that they have lost all feeling of security under the present Government of Syria. There are no Russian ships of war here at present; one which was recently in port having suddenly left, I believe without giving any intimation of her intention to do so. At Smyrna, it was positively stated that the steamers of the Russian Commercial Line on the coast of Syria, have been recalled to the Black Sea.

Fuad Pasha, as will have been reported to your Lordship from various sources, arrived at Damascus on the 29th ultimo, after a good deal of delay at Beyrout. His Excellency, during his stay here, sent Achmet Pasha, late Governor of Damascus, a prisoner to Constantinople. It would have given much more confidence to the people of the country had he been detained and tried here, where evidence against him was obtainable. His Excellency also sent to Constantinople Khorshid Pasha of Beyrout, though not as prisoner; but this was only done, as I am informed by the Admiral, under very strong pressure exerted by himself and Mr. Moore.

I have seen several letters from Damascus which arrived here yesterday and last night. They speak despondingly, in consequence of the uncertainty of ultimate safety, the sad privations of the Christians cooped up in the Castle, and the appearance of disease amongst them. Fuad Pasha's presence had caused a lull for the present, though little had yet been done; indeed it appears as if the Sultan's officers had cautiously to feel their way, as to how far the population would permit them to go. Mohammed Pasha, the new Governor, sent to Damascus, was, by all accounts, a most inefficient officer at Smyrna, his last post. Private communications mention that it had been discovered that another rising had been intended on Saturday, the 28th ultimo, when the Consuls were to have been special objects of attack; but the influence of some of the higher class Moslems, and probably the approach of troops with Fuad Pasha, had prevented its being carried out.

The English Missionary, Mr. Graham, cut down near the English Consulate, was killed in mistake for a Consul, as boasted by his murderer. The Damascus massacre appears to have been solely influenced by the old fanatical feeling prevalent there against Christians; and the Consuls are looked upon as the cause of Christians being raised to an equal footing with Moslems, in the present day. Your Lordship will be pleased to learn that though the writers of the above-named letters often disagree with Mr. Brant as to the existence or extent of danger, they invariably speak in the highest terms of his untiring energy and courage, and attribute the safety of a great portion of the Christians now in the Castle to his vigorous remonstrances and demands addressed to the late Pasha.

In justice to Mr. Moore, I ought also to state, that since my arrival, I have heard foreign Consuls speak with admiration of the determination and energy exhibited by him also, in dealing with the late Pasha of Beyrout, previous to the Deir-el-Kamar massacre.

A letter from the Druse district of Lebanon has just been brought me, which states that the Druses, in fear of a foreign intervention, are sending away their valuables, and propose to retreat to the inaccessible fastnesses of the Ledjah and Hauran, south-east of Damascus. That they have no objection to an inquiry being made by England as to their culpability, and are even prepared

to give up some of the ringleaders; but though they would accept the word of the English Admiral that they should have a fair trial, they would that of no one else. They appear determined to fight to the last against French interference. This comes from a highly respectable European resident (even at this moment) among them. I must offer many apologies to your Lordship for the loose form of these notes, which, in consequence of many interruptions, I am only able to jot down thus rudely in time for to-day's mail. It is probable that I shall leave for Damascus almost immediately.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. J. FRASER.

No. 119.

Major Fraser to Lord J. Russell.—(Received August 22.)

(No. 2.)

My Lord,

Beyrout, August 8, 1860.

ON the 2nd instant, I had the honour to report my arrival in Syria, as well as to make some remarks on the position of affairs at that time. I had proposed to proceed at once to Damascus; but finding his Excellency Fuad Pasha had requested that more troops might be sent, to enable him to proceed with arrests, I considered that the arrival of Europeans in the city might, under the circumstances, excite the populace, and therefore deferred my journey till to-morrow. As regards the general state of the country, it can only be said that the lull which commenced on the arrival of Fuad Pasha still continues. In Damascus, with a garrison of 7,000 men, and in Beyrout, in presence of twenty ships of war and a garrison of about 1,500 men the Sultan's authority can be and is asserted, while Christians may be considered safe. But in too many other quarters they are yet subjected to threats, insult, and plunder. How deeply rooted is the rancour which has now burst forth among the Moslem population, was painfully shown at Damascus last week, in the attempt to poison the wretched pittance of bread issued to the refugees in the Castle, and to which seven or eight fell victims before the diabolical plot was discovered. The baker and others implicated, I am happy to say, were quickly arrested. Five thousand additional Turkish troops are said to be expected from Constantinople. Their arrival will enable an expedition to be made to the vicinity of Hashbeya, and Rasheya-el-Tukkâr, at the western base of Mount Hermon, where many Christians, chiefly women and children, are yet reported to be detained, ill-treated by the Druses in the meantime, and in fear of being put to death or carried away, should there be a general Druse retreat to the Hauran. There are persons who escaped from the villages near Hasbeya at the time of the massacre, and who have hitherto been protected by the sister of Saïd Bey Jumblât, who now either cannot or will not any longer protect them.

On the 4th instant, there arrived here 3,000 of the Christians, who have been cooped up in the Castle of Damascus since the massacre,—the greater part were women and children, and in very sad plight; 12,000 yet remain in the Castle, for whom conveyance has not yet been obtained. They are homeless and beggars, while many have lost all their male relatives, for 3,000 of the male Christian population of Damascus perished in the massacre, besides about 2,000 villagers, who had escaped to the city in search of safety.

It is hoped conveyance will be found for another party of refugees in a day or two.

On the 2nd instant, Fuad Pasha commenced making arrests, first doubling the guards over the Europeans and occupying the city with troops. Up to the present moment the arrested amount to nearly 1,000, chiefly from among the rabble, though, within the last day or two, he has imprisoned some of the higher people. There were great threats of resistance if any attempt was made to punish a Moslem for what has occurred; but not a shot has yet been fired. It appears they did not think the Pasha would do more than fine, imprison, enroll in the army, or perhaps send a few of the principal to Constantinople, but they are now alarmed, and fear they are to be treated much more severely. For the past sixteen years a Moslem has never been put to death for killing a Christian, and they can hardly conceive it will be otherwise now. Hitherto his Excellency's movements have been cautious, yet decided.

A good deal of the more bulky and worthless plunder has been collected; the richer portion has not yet been discovered.

An Aide-de-camp from Fuad Pasha arrived here on the 5th instant, announcing that some 400 arrests had been made, and, with the further view of inducing the European representatives here—particularly those of England and France—to arrest the landing of any military expedition that might have been directed on Syria, on the plea that order was now restored, justice being executed, and that, therefore, foreign intervention was at present unnecessary. This officer came to me, but I told him I had no authority in the matter, and referred him to Mr. Moore and the Admiral, with both of whom, it then appeared, he had already conferred, but with little success. He seemed to say, as from himself, that Fuad Pasha would lose all courage to go on with a task which would make him many enemies, if, notwithstanding all he might do, there would still be an intervention. I assured him that I thought this a false view of the position, and that Fuad Pasha's best security against foreign intervention would be to demonstrate that he was actively fulfilling the task for which he had been deputed by the Sultan, viz., the signal punishment of the guilty, whatever position they might occupy, and the re-establishment of order and security for the future. That it was not to be supposed there would be any interference whatever, until it was evident that the officer who had been deputed to the task had failed in its accomplishment.

I have letters from Damascus this morning, but no executions were yet known to have taken place; and all proceedings connected with the prisoners were conducted with great secrecy.

I must again repeat that the prospect of a French occupation, unaccompanied by an English or other force, is viewed with great disfavour, both by the Government and by the inhabitants of the country generally, with the exception, perhaps, of some of the Maronites, there being a generally prevailing fear that it will be difficult to induce the French to quit Syria again. Accompanied by an English force, or by a mixed expedition, composed of contingents from the several Powers who signed the Treaty of Paris, an armed intervention would not have been viewed with suspicion, as is the case at present.

A proclamation was issued, a few days ago, announcing that, by the Sultan's wish, a foreign military expedition would shortly arrive in Syria, and that it was to be received with friendship. This will, I trust, remove all misconception on the part of the Moslems of the interior.

The French Consul-General here asserts that the occupation will only be "momentary," as he expresses it; and that, though it be exclusively French, there need be no difficulty about it, if the other European representatives here will only support it frankly and fairly. A few soldiers of the "Intendance Militaire," with some stores, have been landed, and accommodation for sick provided, but no expeditionary force has yet appeared. Some attempts have been made to enlist natives among the Maronites, it is not yet known for what purpose; while about 2,000 Algerines, Abd-el-Kader's men, are now maintained by France at Damascus.

The Chiefs of the Druses are holding meetings in various parts of the mountains. One was held yesterday, within ten miles of Beyrout, and Said Bey has summoned one near Rasheya, probably to decide on some proposal to be made, or other general plan of action. They feel they are now likely to be made "scape-goats," and make assertions that they were encouraged, or at least countenanced by the Government authorities, though no documentary evidence has yet been shown. It is, however, a remarkable fact, that the only points at which serious massacres occurred were precisely and exclusively the points at which there were Turkish garrisons. Witness the tragedies of Hasbeya, Rasheya, Deir-el-Kamar, Sidon, Zahlé, Damascus,—the principal garrisons of this part of Syria. Near Beyrout itself, the villages of Baddâb and Hadad were burned within 300 yards of the Pasha's camp, and before his eyes, without an attempt made to save them, the only movement made being on the part of the Bashi-Bozouks, who rushed forth to plunder the Christians.

Having recently seen in a newspaper that M. Musurus, the Turkish Ambassador in London, had stated to your Lordship that there were only 400 troops in Syria at the date of the outbreak, I find, on inquiry, that there

were from 4,000 to 5,000 men in this part of Syria alone, and I hope shortly to be able to give their exact numbers and distribution.

In conclusion, I beg to state that I experience very great difficulty in procuring information at present, in consequence of the interrupted communication between the different parts of the country, while many of the actors in the late events have already emigrated. I am collecting information, however, as opportunity offers, regarding the outbreaks and massacres at each point, with a view to drawing up a detailed report hereafter. I must again beg your Lordship's indulgence for the shortcomings of the clerical department, in which I have not hitherto been able to obtain any assistance.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. J. FRASER.

No. 120.

Consul-General Moore to Lord J. Russell.—(Received August 27.)

(No. 31.)

My Lord,

Beyrout, August 10, 1860.

I HAVE the honor to report that Ahmed Pasha, the ex-Seraskier and Governor-General of Damascus, returned to Beyrout on the 8th instant, having been sent back by the Porte to take his trial on the spot, the scene of his misdeeds. He is to be followed, it is understood, by Khoorshid Pasha, the late Governor-General of Beyrout, for the same purpose. This measure cannot be too highly commended, and nothing short of it would have satisfied the exigencies of the case, or even secured a proper trial by affording the necessary evidence direct and circumstantial, which a local inquiry can alone render available.

Although happily no fresh outbreak or disturbance on a large scale has occurred anywhere, yet I have to report the country as in a very disorganised and anarchical state; the Druses continue their depredations and molestations against the Christians, notwithstanding the peace patched up; the inclosed memorial I have received from some survivors of the massacre at Hasbeya will give your Lordship an idea of what is going on there and elsewhere. I am unremitting in my endeavours to procure protection for those unfortunate people from the Turkish authorities, with whom I am in constant communication by interviews or representation, with that object, but I regret that the necessity they plead of a reference to Fuad Pasha at Damascus prevents that promptitude of action which I should wish to see under circumstances of such urgency. In this particular case, the results of my efforts has been the despatch of an express to Fuad Pasha to bring the position of the Christian fugitives of Hasbeya to his Excellency's knowledge with a view to his taking the necessary measures for their relief. From the inclosed copy of a letter of thanks I have received from the Rev. Mr. Ford, inclosing one from the Protestants of Cana, your Lordship will perceive that I have been able to secure protection to others as well.

From the Christians of the coast towns I receive frequent urgent applications for British men-of-war to be sent for their protection, on account of the alarm they feel in consequence of the demeanour of the Mahometans. Yesterday, for instance, a deputation of Christians from Acre called upon me with the same request. I brought their prayer to the knowledge of Admiral Martin, who at once ordered the "Firefly" to proceed thither, and to convey the members of the deputation to their town at their solicitation. Admiral Martin has with equal readiness attended to all my suggestions in respect to the despatch of vessels to different points on the coast, besides affording me the weight of his support and influence in my communications with the authorities.

Ever since the news of the projected French occupation, the Druses have been in a state of the greatest uneasiness and perplexity. They recently held a general meeting of chiefs in the Arkoob, the district of the Amad clan, to consider their position and decide upon a line of action in certain eventualities. I am informed by one of themselves, through an agent, that the decision come to is to retire further into the interior on the arrival of foreign troops to attack them, and to address memorials to the British and Turkish Governments, appealing to them against unjust treatment. They place all their hopes in the English. The leading chiefs cling to me with the tenacity of desperation for

support. I judge it proper, pending the receipt of your Lordship's instructions, to give them such answers as satisfy them for the present and pledge me to no specific engagement.

At Damascus, Fuad Pasha's arrests had reached between 700 and 800; one execution had taken place—that of the Mahometan who attempted to poison the Christians in the Castle; but on the same day of the execution, and almost simultaneously, a Christian was murdered in the streets by Mahometans, who, it is said, had sworn to kill a Christian for every Mahometan put to death. Mr. Consul Brant reports that it is now certain that upwards of 5,000 Christians were slaughtered in Damascus; but the French Consul raises the number of victims to 8,000.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. MOORE.

August 12.

P.S.—In consequence of my representations, Fuad Pasha has sent an order to the Commanding Officer at Beyrout, Ismail Pasha, to send a battalion of troops for the protection of the Christians at Hasbeya and Rasbeya. The troops have orders to attack the Druses if they continue to molest the Christians.

(Signed) N. MOORE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 120.

The Christians of Hasbeya to Consul-General Moore.

August 8, 1860.

YOUR servants, the inhabitants of Hasbeya and the neighbouring villages, beg to state that your Seigneurie is aware of the misfortunes which have befallen us—namely, our men massacred, our houses burnt, our property plundered. The surviving widows and orphans are in a deplorable state, remaining in the power of the Druses, in danger and insecurity on account of the threats held out by the Druses to them, besides other horrors they are exposed to, which we cannot from delicacy explain to you. The Druses still continue to demolish and destroy our houses, cut down our trees, and kill any of the few survivors they at any time meet with alone outside the houses in which they have found an asylum.

Oh, Sir, how many children have perished from starvation, how many women are still dispersed in the wilderness without shelter, clothes to cover their bodies, or food to sustain life; they are naked and bare-footed, the sky their covering, and the earth their bed.

We, your servants, throw ourselves at your feet, imploring you in the name of God to look with compassion and mercy into the state of these widows and orphans, dispersed in the wilderness, mountains, and caves, &c., and to take measures to deliver them out of their distress by procuring their withdrawal from amongst the Druses, those ravening wolves who seek to fall upon them from all sides. We, your servants, have no asylum or help but God and the mercy of your Government. God forbid that you should allow these widows and orphans in this state to perish from hunger and fear; your compassion and benevolence towards us have always been great.

Inclosure 2 in No. 120.

The Rev. J. E. Ford to Consul-General Moore.

Sir,

Beyrout, August 11, 1860.

SOME weeks since, you were so kind as to furnish the Protestant community of Cana with a letter to Hassan Bey El Faris, the Governor of their district, commending them to his special care and protection; as the beneficial effects of your efforts on their behalf have been so manifest as to lead them to write a letter of acknowledgment, describing the conduct of Hassan Bey toward

them, and toward all the Christians in his vicinity. I hasten to lay before you the said letter, begging leave at the same time to add my own thanks as pastor of the little flock who have thus been preserved from sharing in the general destruction.

Permit me to subscribe myself with sentiments of the highest respect,
(Signed) J. E. FORD.

No. 121.

Mr. Fane to Lord J. Russell.—(Received August 27.)

(No. 59.)

My Lord,

Vienna, August 23, 1860.

ON the receipt of your Lordship's telegram of the 19th instant, I informed Count Rechberg that Her Majesty's Government approved the instructions which the French Government proposed to address to its Commissioner for the Affairs of Syria, and that the British Commissioner would receive instructions nearly identical with those furnished to his French colleague.

Count Rechberg said that he also approved the French instructions, and he was glad to have his opinion of them confirmed by that of Her Majesty's Government. He should issue similar instructions to the Austrian Commissioner who, he informed me, had been appointed in the person of M. Weckbecker, now Imperial Consul-General at Beyrout.

His Excellency added that, in case the Commissioners should be authorized to apply for any supplementary instructions which they might require to the Ambassadors at Constantinople, he hoped that care would be taken that the instructions issuing from those sources should be identical. With this view he should instruct the Austrian Representative at Constantinople to furnish no instruction to the Imperial Commissioner except in concert with his colleagues, and he hoped Her Majesty's Government would recommend their Representative to follow the same course.

Acting on your Lordship's suggestion, I took the opportunity of observing to Count Rechberg that, as the foreign intervention in Syria was a matter involving questions of much delicacy and difficulty, the course of events there, and the attitude assumed by all parties, would require to be very narrowly watched, and I was glad to find his Excellency keenly sensible of the importance of exercising great vigilance and circumspection, not only upon this, but upon every question relating to Eastern politics.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JULIAN FANE.

No. 122.

Lord Bloomfield to Lord J. Russell.—(Received August 27.)

(No. 320.)

My Lord,

Berlin, August 25, 1860.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 308 of the 18th instant, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that the Prussian Government have decided to draw up instructions to their Commissioner in Syria, in the sense of those which have been addressed to Lord Dufferin, the substance of which has been made known to this Government by Count Bernstorff.

M. de Gruner told me yesterday that nobody had yet been finally selected for the office of Commissioner, but I understand that the choice of the Prussian Government is likely to fall on the Consul at Beyrout, M. Weber.

I have, &c.
(Signed) BLOOMFIELD.

P.S.—Since signing the above, I have heard that M. de Rehfues, Secretary to the Prussian Legation at Constantinople, is appointed Commissioner in Syria.

B.

No. 123.

Lord J. Russell to Consul-General Moore.

(No. 5.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, August 30, 1860.

I HAVE to acquaint you that I approve of the steps taken by you, as reported in your despatch No. 27 of the 4th instant, to effect the release of several Christian women and children from the hands of the Druses, in the neighbourhood of Deir-el-Kamar, and also to recover a considerable amount of property plundered from Christians.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 124.

Lord J. Russell to Sir H. Bulwer.

(No. 455.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, August 30, 1860.

YOUR Excellency was made aware by my despatch No. 424 of the 16th instant, that Her Majesty's Government considered the condition of the Christian women who had been carried off by the Druses was the question which demanded the earliest attention of the Commissioners sent to Syria, and that Lord Dufferin was instructed to press upon Fuad Pasha and his European colleagues the necessity of taking immediate measures for rescuing those unfortunate women from their lamentable situation.

Your Excellency will press this matter most urgently on the Porte, and you will say that it admits of no delay. The sufferings of these women must call forth the strongest feelings of sympathy on the part of all Christian nations.

You will also take such measures as may appear to you most advisable to provide for the maintenance of these poor women till they can find permanent homes and means of subsistence.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 125.

Lord J. Russell to Earl Cowley.

(No. 845.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, August 31, 1860.

I PRESUME there will be no necessity for sending to Syria the second division of 6,000 men mentioned in the Convention. But should such a necessity arise, Her Majesty's Government will be ready to send 3,000, and they have reason to believe that Prussia will be ready to send 3,000 to complete the number. So long, however, as it does not appear probable that any necessity will arise for despatching these troops, it may be as well that your Excellency should not discuss the matter with your colleagues. But should it arise, you are authorized to speak in the sense of this despatch.

It must be observed, that after the beginning or middle of October, no fleet can remain with safety on the coast of Syria.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 126.

Major Fraser to Lord J. Russell.—(Received September 1.)

(No. 4.)

My Lord,

Damascus, August 20, 1860.

I HASTEN to report that the execution of the criminals condemned for their share in the massacre at Damascus, commenced, somewhat unexpectedly, at 10 o'clock last night (Sunday). At that hour, fifty-seven culprits, four or five being of superior position, were hanged in the bazaars and public squares of different quarters of the city, where their bodies yet remain. Two hours ago, 110 others, connected with the irregular troops in the employment of the Government, were shot outside the city, on the plain called the "Merj," or meadow.

The trials of the arrested still continue. That of Achmet, late Pasha of Damascus, is closed; but the sentence is not yet promulgated. Omar Bey, the Colonel commanding the troops at Hasbeya during the massacre there, is before the Court to-day. Sentence is also being recorded against many who have fled, but have not yet surrendered or been captured. Arrests and disarmaments still continue. There has not been hitherto the slightest attempt at resistance. I confine myself to these bare details on the present occasion, as I desire to take advantage of a Turkish post about to leave, affording a speedier conveyance than usual. I propose to transmit a longer report by a safer channel.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. J. FRASER.

No. 127.

*Fuad Pasha to Aali Pasha.—(Communicated to Lord J. Russell by M. Musurus, September 1.)**Damas, le 20 Aout, 1860, le soir.*

CE matin, 167 des coupables dont le jugement est clos, ont été exécutés publiquement. Cinquante-sept de ces condamnés ont été pendus aux endroits les plus populeux de la ville, et 110 individus appartenant à la police locale ont été fusillés sur la place dite Djenk-Méidan. La ville est frappée de terreur, aucun mouvement n'a été observé dans la ville durant les exécutions.

Demain, les coupables condamnés aux travaux forcés et à la détention seront, sous bonne escorte, dirigés sur Beyrouth pour être immédiatement embarqués pour Constantinople.

Parmi les coupables pendus il y a des frères, des fils et parents, des plus grandes notabilités du pays. Aucun compte n'est tenu de leur rang ou dignité. Demain seront également arrêtés, jugés et punis tous les notables compromis.

Le procès de l'ex-Gouverneur Ahmed Agha et d'autres officiers se poursuit par devant le Conseil de Guerre, dont les sentences recevront leur exécution dès qu'elles auront été prononcées.

Les coupables qui ont pu s'évader après les massacres sont aussi jugés par contumace. Ils subiront leur peine dès qu'ils seront saisis.

L'armée du Sultan agit avec la discipline la plus rigoureuse et la plus parfaite loyauté. La main de la justice est maîtresse absolue de la situation.

La tranquillité est parfaite sur tout le littoral de la Syrie. La sécurité est rétablie à Saïda et les environs.

Agréé, &c.
(Signé) FUAD PASHA.

No. 128.

Consul-General Moore to Lord J. Russell.—(Received September 1.)

(No. 35.)

My Lord,

Beyrouth, August 22, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to report, that troops belonging to the French expeditionary force continue to arrive at Beyrouth; about 5,000 men, including

200 Cavalry, have landed up to this date, with an immense quantity of stores, ammunition, and mules for the carriage of field-pieces. The camping ground chosen is the pine wood, about two miles distant from the city, skirting the new carriageable road to Damascus. The disembarkation is effected at a creek a few minutes' walk from the town; the troops then march up to the town, and pass it, without entering, on to the camp, preceded by their bands playing the national air.

I need hardly say that the occupation is viewed with the utmost aversion by the Mahometans; a scowl is visible on their faces as the troops march past; and their general manner is irritable and sullen, breaking out occasionally in sneers and insult to the Christians, and in some cases in personal violence upon the slightest occasion or fancied provocation. Thanks, however, to the energetic measures of repression taken by Ahmed Kaiserli Pasha, the new Governor-General, added to a proclamation issued by his Excellency, forbidding the carriage of arms of any kind by the townspeople, Christian and Mahometan, no disturbances of the sort are likely to occur again.

On the other hand the Christians are overjoyed. On the landing of the troops, Christian refugees relieve the men of their muskets, knapsacks, &c., which they carry for them all the way to the camp; others offer the soldiers water, tobacco, lemonade, &c., gratis.

I cannot but state to your Lordship that a great and general feeling of relief and sense of security amongst the Christians, European and native, has followed the arrival of the French. Previous to this event, no one knew what, or when, fresh disasters might not take place, and nothing short of a European occupation really guaranteeing as it does the public safety, could have removed their apprehensions. At the same time much disappointment is expressed at the non-arrival of English troops, one of the first good effects of whose presence would have been to calm and re-assure the Mahometans.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. MOORE.

No. 129.

Consul-General Moore to Lord J. Russell.—(Received September 1.)
(No. 36.)

My Lord,

Beyrout, August 22, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to report that Ahmed Kaiserli Pasha, the new Governor-General of this eyalet, has arrived, and entered upon his functions. His Excellency bears a high character for uprightness, integrity, and ability. The usual visits of ceremony have been exchanged between us.

Khoorsheed Pasha, the late Governor-General, returned a few days ago from Constantinople, under arrest, having been sent back by his Government to take his trial on the spot. He is confined in a private house, with sentries at the door to guard him.

Satisfactory news to the 20th instant came in this morning from Damascus. Fuad Pasha had commenced the executions on that day; 57 Mahometans, including some notables, were hanged in all parts of the city, and 110 irregulars and conscripts shot; between 300 and 400 were prepared to be marched away as prisoners to Beyrout, on their way to Constantinople. As Mr. Consul Brant writes to your Lordship by this opportunity, I have no doubt he will give all details.

I beg to inclose copy of a communication which I have received from Mr. Cyril Graham, who returned from Damascus on the 20th instant, which is a sequel to his report of his visit to Hasbeya and Rasheya, already transmitted to your Lordship by Mr. Brant.

The Druses maintain the same attitude and determination as when I had last the honour to address your Lordship.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. MOORE.

Inclosure in No. 129.

*Sequel to Mr. Graham's Report of his Visit to Hasbeya and Rasheya.**

I MENTIONED in my report of the 13th of August, that immediately on my return from the Province of Hasbeya and Rasheya, I had, in the course of a lengthened interview with Fuad Pasha, suggested to his Excellency the expediency of forming a division among the Druses of Rasheya, by inviting Khazai Aga-el-Arian to Damascus, and offering him a safe passage back again, should he consent to come.

I likewise recommended his Excellency to send a sufficient force, and some artillery, to both the above-mentioned towns, for the protection of the large Christian population which still remained there in hourly fear of their lives. I entreated him to take these steps with the least possible delay, in order to anticipate the report of the arrival of French troops.

Fuad Pasha did me the honour of attending to both these suggestions, and immediately dispatched Hassan Bek (Colonel O'Reilly) to Sidon, with orders to march up one battalion and two pieces of artillery on Hasbeya, while a half battalion, on the way from Beyrout to Damascus, was to be intercepted in the Bokaa, the plain of Coele-Syria, and ordered to march upon Rasheya. His Excellency likewise dispatched a letter to Khazai Agha desiring his immediate appearance in the city, at the same time giving me the commission of writing to him (Khazai Agha) myself, and giving him safe passage on the promise of the Pasha. At the same time, no pains were spared to sow jealousy in the other faction at Rasheya—that of Mohammed Nasar. All this had the desired effect. Khazai Agha, after taking measures for the protection of the Christians, came to Damascus, and this so disconcerted the other Chief, that he marched off and removed all his Druses, leaving the place in the quiet possession of the Christians, under the protection of the friendly faction among the Druses. The interview between his Excellency and this Druse Chief was of great value, and it ended by his guaranteeing to protect the Christians, or, if necessary, to remove them to Sidon. By this time the regular troops will have reached their destination, and the Christians will be fully protected. We cannot be thankful enough for this, as we had cause, and good cause, to fear that, under the most favourable circumstances, this result would not have been obtained without bloodshed.

Fuad Pasha has likewise appointed a Mutsellim or Governor in each of these towns, thus reassuming the authority of the Porte in one of the wildest and most disturbed of the provinces of Syria. One hundred and fifty Cavalry are likewise placed at the disposal of the Governor of Rasheya.

(Signed) CYRIL C. GRAHAM.

Beyrout, August 22, 1860.

No. 130.

Sir H. Bulwer to Lord J. Russell.—(Received September 2.)
(No. 523.)

My Lord,

Therapia, August 21, 1860.

I HAVE read with interest the letter which the Emperor of the French lately addressed to his Ambassador in London; and the style and sentiments of that letter are such as cannot fail to be exceedingly satisfactory to one who desires to see the best relations maintained between France and Great Britain, and it is, moreover, gratifying to me to know that Her Majesty's Government has the intention, should the French occupation be continued, of adding thereto an English force.

My impression, after the perusal of that letter, indeed, is that the French expedition will not be left in Syria for any length of time.

Still, it is perhaps my duty to make a few observations in support of those that I lately addressed to your Lordship, concerning the importance of the position which France might occupy, if, for any reason or other, she were to

* For the first portion of Mr. Graham's Report, dated the 13th of August, see p. 120.
2 G

remain for any considerable time the only Power possessing an army on the Syrian coast.

Your Lordship is aware that Syria has always been considered, by all those who have established their empire in the East, as the especial country on which any scheme of Eastern conquest might best be based.

It is, in fact, the connecting point between Africa on the one side and Asia on the other. I need hardly say that the conquests of France in late years in Africa, the position she has recently acquired in Italy and in Spain, and the great military marine which is at this moment at her command, place her in a situation which she has never previously occupied, were she really to meditate those plans of extension which the Emperor Napoleon, I believe, sincerely declares he does not at this instant entertain.

The more, indeed, we examine this question in detail, the more we shall probably be struck by its importance and by the necessity of keeping our eyes steadily fixed upon it.

From the neighbourhood of Toulouse, where I believe a large military force is to be found, railways conduct directly to Toulon and Marseilles, whence in a very few days any number of troops might arrive at Beyrout.

Any force, however small, will carry with it, in the first instance, all the means for establishing a much larger one; and it is to be observed, that the officers who have in the present case been sent for the purpose of providing for the expected French army have always spoken of 12,000, and not of 6,000, as the number of troops expected. A French army once at Beyrout, a large population which considers itself French (the Maronites of the Mountain), become instantly a portion of the French army; and as the object of the present expedition is to overawe or subdue the other portions of the Syrian population, it is to be considered that the power of the French will be, both morally and materially, considerably augmented by the destruction or intimidation of those against whom the Maronites have to complain.

Again, the only position of military importance which separates Egypt from Syria, is, I believe, El Arish. By taking possession of El Arish, to which it is easy to arrive from Beyrout, the French would be masters of Egypt as well as of Syria, even were the forces of the Viceroy disposed to combat on the side of the Sultan, which is not certain.

The military roads which open into the country, start also from El Arish, and lead directly to Suez, and from Suez to Cairo on the one side, and to Akaba on the other. It is always to be remembered, moreover, that the French army will be augmented by a large number of irregulars, and that the genius and character of the Eastern populations generally is to side with the most powerful.

As to the forces of Turkey, in the present condition of the Empire, they are hardly to be counted upon, and it is even to be presumed that the justice which the Sultan is now properly called upon to exercise upon those of his own faith will in no small degree affect his authority over them.

My remarks, however, do not merely apply to what I consider the improbable contingency of any hostile design on the part of the French Government at this moment.

It seems to me necessary, that, in considering the future situation of Syria, and the Government that is to be established there, the circumstances to which I have called your Lordship's attention should not be overlooked.

I have heard from travellers who were in Syria at the time, that for months previous to the recent outbreak, the Maronites were collecting and receiving arms; and that they made no secret of their intention to use those arms in extending their authority, and that they stated that they counted upon the aid of France in their project.

It is highly probable that they stated this without just grounds, I am persuaded that they did; but I think it essential that no arrangement which may now be made through the influence of a French force, should favor their pretensions in any unwarrantable degree. It would be exceedingly desirable, indeed, that the exclusive protection of the French over the Maronites should now cease, by some other arrangement, and that the peculiar privileges, both of the Druses and Maronites, should be merged into some general system of government. If it was considered that the assurances of the Turks could not be a sufficient guarantee for this Government being duly carried on, a small

mixed force composed of French and English, not exceeding 1,000 men, might possibly be left in Syria, in order to strengthen the hands of the Porte, and supply the additional protection to the Christians, which they expect from Foreign Powers.

Any general system of this kind, even if thus supported, would, I am inclined to think, be better than restoring things to their ancient state; but it would be essential in such case, that the number of troops left in Syria by France were not greater than those left by other Powers; and every sign of her ascendancy in these countries, or any encouragement of the supposition that Europe has consigned them to her peculiar superintendence, must, I think, be carefully guarded against.

I should add, that nothing can be more fair than M. de Lavalette's language, or more clearly demonstrating a disposition to act without reference to peculiar national influence.

What I say, however, is not on account of any peculiar suspicion of the French Government, still less perhaps on account of any suspicion of the present Ruler of France, who has manifested on various occasions a desire to maintain friendly relations with us, and who, I really believe, is animated by friendly feelings towards us, but because a Government cannot place itself temporarily in such position as I have described, without entailing thereby certain consequences both on itself and on those who succeed to it, which go frequently beyond what was at first expected. I say nothing of Algiers, which Charles X took possession of with an intention to restore it, but which Louis Philippe, with the most earnest necessity for an alliance, found it necessary to keep. But if we look at the present position of France as to Syria, as concerns the Catholics, what indeed was it owing to? A temporary influence which has never been suffered to die away. So with regard to the Rhine; the temporary occupation of that frontier under peculiar and transitory circumstances has generated a belief in Frenchman not extraordinary, if we consider the working of the human mind, that it is the national boundary of France.

I am the more earnest about matters of this kind, because I think that the great object of English policy must be to maintain the most cordial relations with our great neighbour. But I know your Lordship agrees with me, that the way to maintain such relations is to prevent questions of a character likely to produce hostility growing up and arriving at a condition which admits of no compromise.

By dealing with difficulties at their commencement we check their development, and by checking their development we have to treat them before they have assumed any great importance.

The unhappy weakness of Turkey, the horrible atrocities committed under her sway, the culpable conduct of her public functionaries, rendered it a matter of humanity and necessity to consent to the expedition that has now taken place, and the wisest and most cautious must submit to necessity; all I am desirous for is, that this necessity should be as much guarded as possible against future embarrassments, and though I know that Her Majesty's Government is attentively watching what is now passing with the same object as myself, I cannot refrain from expressing respectfully my own sentiments, and the reasons on which they are founded.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. L. BULWER.

No. 151.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received September 2.)
(No. 1,152.)

My Lord,

Paris, September 1, 1860.

I INQUIRED to-day of M. Thouvenel whether he was in possession of any fresh intelligence from Syria. His Excellency replied, that the reports which he had received were far from being satisfactory. Although massacres on a wholesale scale had ceased, assassinations were constant, and the state of the country very bad. If the French troops had not been sent, Fuad Pasha would

have been powerless, and it was only on their arrival that he had dared order the executions which had taken place. With respect to these executions M. Thouvenel expressed himself very disapprovingly. It was the history of Jeddah over again. Such wholesale fusillades had more the appearance of vengeance than of punishment, and while the instruments in the massacres were put to death, the organizers and promoters of them escaped. He feared that Fuad Pasha would not have the resolution to do that which alone would inspire wholesome awe—cause one or two of the most guilty of the high officers to be decapitated.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

No. 132.

Lord J. Russell to Lord Bloomfield.

(No. 163.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, September 2, 1860.

COUNT BERNSTORFF has communicated to me an instruction from his Court, in which, with reference to the French instructions to their Commissioner in Syria, which the Prussian Cabinet concurs in and adopts, Count Bernstorff is directed to point out to Her Majesty's Government that in the event alluded to in the French instructions, of the Representatives of the Five Powers seeing occasion to send special instructions to the Commissioners of the Powers in Syria, it is important that they should come to a previous understanding among themselves, so as thereby to secure agreement among the Commissioners.

Your Lordship will state to Baron Schleinitz that Her Majesty's Government entirely agree with his Excellency on that point. But they are of opinion that the best course to ensure unanimity in the Commission would be to desire the Representatives at Constantinople to act in concert with regard to any special instructions which they may think it desirable to transmit to Syria, rather than to add a paragraph to that effect, as suggested by the Prussian Government, to the instructions already sent to the Commissioners.

If the Prussian Government agree to this view, a proposal in that sense may be made to the Courts of France and Russia. Her Majesty's Government have been apprised by Count Apponyi that the Cabinet of Vienna entertains the same opinion on the subject as that of Berlin.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 133.

Mr. Erskine to Lord J. Russell.—(Received September 3.)

(No. 65.)

My Lord,

St. Petersburg, August 21, 1860.

I AM informed by Prince Gortchakoff that he has been consulted by the Prussian Government as to whether the Commissioners about to be sent to Syria should be placed under the orders of their respective Embassies and Missions at Constantinople, or whether they should receive their instructions directly from their Government.

Prince Gortchakoff stated to the Prussian Minister that he coincided with the views attributed to Her Majesty's Government on this point, and that M. Novikow, First Secretary of the Russian Legation at Constantinople, who had been selected as Commissioner for Russia, would be furnished with instructions by the Russian Envoy at Constantinople, and would correspond with that Legation.

I have, &c.
(Signed) E. M. ERSKINE.

No. 134.

M. Musurus to Mr. Hammond.

Mon cher M. Hammond,

St. Leonards, le 3 Septembre, 1860.

JE m'empresse de vous transmettre, ci-jointe, la copie d'une dépêche télégraphique que je viens de recevoir de Constantinople, et qui est la reproduction, ou plutôt la traduction du Turc, de celle qui m'a été expédiée par l'entremise du Consul Ottoman à Malte, et que j'ai eu l'honneur de vous communiquer avant-hier.

Votre, &c.
(Signé) C. MUSURUS.

Inclosure in No. 134.

Fuad Pasha to Aali Pasha.

Damas, le 16 Seffer, 1277 (20 Aout, 1860).

DES 167 individus condamnés à la mort parmi les révoltés arrêtés pour avoir pris une part active à l'événement de Damas, 56 ont été publiquement pendus, aujourd'hui Lundi, dans les rues de la ville, et les 111 fusillés sur la place publique de Damas. Les peines encourues ont été ainsi publiquement infligées, sans que, grâce à la présence des forces militaires, la tranquillité ait été troublée nulle part pendant ces exécutions.

Parmi ceux des coupables qui méritaient le plus la peine capitale, il s'est trouvé des gens appartenant aux familles notables du pays; ceux-ci aussi ont été exécutés sans distinction.

Au fur et à mesure que l'instruction des autres accusés sera achevée, et leurs crimes constatés, leur peine sera successivement et publiquement infligée. De même, ceux qui auront mérité les peines des travaux forcés ou de détention dans les forteresses seront embarqués à Beyrouth et envoyés à Constantinople. L'ex-Muchir et les officiers inculpés se trouvent en jugement devant le Conseil Militaire institué à cet effet. Aucun obstacle n'étant à craindre pour l'arrestation des notables du pays qui se trouvent inculpés dans ces affaires, ceux-ci aussi seront arrêtés demain.

No. 135.

Consul Brant to Lord J. Russell.—(Received September 4.)

(No. 12.)

My Lord,

Damascus, August 11, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith copies of three despatches addressed to his Excellency Sir Henry Lytton Bulwer.

I have had an interview to-day with Fuad Pasha, in order to give your Lordship some precise details regarding his Excellency's intentions. He had received from the principal persons in each quarter of the city, lists stating who were known to be murderers, who plunderers, and who excitors of the mob to acts of bloodshed, robbery and arson. His Excellency said that the information now obtained would enable him in a few days to close the inquiries and pass sentence, which would be followed by the immediate execution of all those who had committed crimes worthy of death, irrespective of numbers; some would be condemned to imprisonment for life, some to the Bagnio, and a large number would be enrolled in the troops serving in any part of the Empire but Syria. Nothing could be stronger than the expressions of horror made use of by his Excellency at the enormity of the crimes committed, and the infamy of the conduct of the generality of the Damascenes. His Excellency talked of imposing a fine of 25,000,000 piastres, about 200,000*l.* sterling. I told him I could not form an estimate of the loss, but that my opinion was that 5,000,000*l.* sterling would scarcely suffice to cover the destruction of property, and indemnify those who have lost money, jewels, plate, and articles of dress.

It has been ascertained, with tolerable accuracy, that about 3,500 Christians, natives of Damascus, were massacred, and about 2,000 strangers who had taken refuge in the town for safety.

I expressed a hope that his Excellency by his energy and activity might prove that security and order were restored and could be maintained on so certain a basis that an occupation by European troops would not be needed. He said he would endeavour to convince Europe of this, and he hoped a few days would prove the fact.

I must say that Fuad Pasha, considering the difficulties he has had to contend with, and the obstacles thrown in his way, has proved himself equal to the task imposed on his Excellency by his Sovereign; and I have every hope that he will not fail to complete the work he has so ably and energetically begun.

I have, &c.

(Signed) JAS. BRANT.

Inclosure 1 in No. 135.

Consul Brant to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Damascus, July 31, 1860.

I AVAIL of the departure of a special messenger, sent by his Excellency Fuad Pasha, to forward to your Excellency copies of two despatches addressed to Lord John Russell. Fuad Pasha made his entry with the Mushir Helim Pasha at mid-day on the 29th instant, and this morning, at 8 A.M., I waited on his Excellency. He asked of me particulars as to facts and circumstances, and any suggestions I could make as to the state of affairs. I drew up a short memorandum, and am preparing another. I was much struck by his Excellency's frank and energetic bearing and conversation, and I have every hope that his mission will be conducted in a manner to satisfy Europe, to remove the stain thrown on his Government by the conduct of its employés in Syria, and to restore the Sultan's authority.

His Excellency professes his anxious desire to relieve the distress of the sufferers, and one cannot help trusting the apparent sincerity of his declarations on this point, and hoping that what is possible to be done may be effected. The evil, however, so exceeds all that can be imagined, except by eye-witnesses, that I fear it is beyond the means of the Turkish Government to do more than partially alleviate a very small part of so extensive a calamity.

I have, &c.

(Signed) JAS. BRANT.

Inclosure 2 in No. 135.

Consul Brant to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Damascus, August 4, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to report to your Excellency that, on the 1st August, in the afternoon, I waited on Fuad Pasha, and gave his Excellency a long memorandum, containing a list of the most notorious murderers and plunderers, also a list of persons who had done harm by their mischievous display of bigotry, exciting the people to the massacre of the Christians. The memorandum gave the names of some of the respectable persons of the city who had behaved well. His Excellency thanked me for the information, and compared it with that he had received from other sources, with which mine in general agreed. The same morning the intelligence reached from Beyrout that a French force would soon be there, and that an officer of the Staff had arrived to announce the fact and make preparations for its reception. I took the opportunity of expressing my opinion that the force would not advance into the interior unless it were invited by his Excellency, in the event of his finding he had not sufficient troops to restore order and confidence. He promised he would do so, before the arrival of the forces, and I think I perceived he considered the expedition somewhat hasty. His

Excellency, however, had been warned of it by a courier from Constantinople, and of the consent of the Sultan having been given to its landing in Syria. Fuad Pasha also told me that he was preparing his measures, and only awaited the arrival of two battalions, expected to reach the 3rd instant, to strike the blow. Accordingly, yesterday morning, at a little after 5 A.M., the troops having come in, the guards at the Consulates and throughout the city were doubled, the shops closed, and the streets deserted; during the whole day arrests were made, plunder delivered up or seized; and it is said that between 300 and 400 of the worst characters were seized, disarmed, and imprisoned. Everybody was in alarm, and all were cringing to Europeans in order to obtain a good word from them. To-day the arrests continue, but no Chiefs have as yet been seized; the Pasha's plan seems to be to catch the lower class of assassins before he touches the Chiefs. Meanwhile the greatest panic exists among the Mussulmans of all classes and ranks, and their tone has entirely changed from what it was a few days ago, and no one ventures to threaten death to the Christians in case of the landing of European troops in Syria. Thus we have, I am happy to say, made a great advance towards the restoration of confidence, and the most timid now feel that they are safe.

I am happy to say that ophthalmia alone prevails among the crowds sheltered within the walls of the Castle; but fever does not exist, nor even dysentery, which was hardly to be expected under the circumstances.

I have, &c.

(Signed) JAS. BRANT.

Inclosure 3 in No. 135.

Consul Brant to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Damascus, August 9, 1860.

I HAVE been waiting in expectation of having something decisive to report to your Excellency in regard to Fuad Pasha's acts. His Excellency began by availing himself of every source of information to learn the exact position of affairs. This, however, was not easy, for he was misled and thwarted by the members of the Medjlis, who thought his Excellency was an employé of the ordinary kind, and that by opposing searching investigations, and by procrastination, he would be tired out. They have found, however, that they were mistaken; still it required several days to extract any trustworthy reports from them, yet I think his Excellency has at last succeeded, and although these gentlemen have not acted candidly, I believe a good deal has been learned from them, on pressure being applied. Property of great bulk has been restored, but I fear of small value. About 750 persons accused of murder and robbing, or of robbing alone, are under arrest; some have been proved guilty of murder; only one, as yet, has been executed; and in the Christian quarter the very same day a Christian was massacred, and the report was spread about the city that the inhabitants were determined to murder a Christian for every Mussulman executed. This report has renewed a panic, and increased the desire of the Christians to quit the city, many of whom were beginning to think that they might be able to remain.

The Criminal Commission cannot get any witnesses to swear to a man being a murderer; many will testify that people have been guilty of plundering, but, as to murder, one might almost believe that none had been committed; and although it is certain that above 5,000 persons have been massacred in broad daylight, or by the light of blazing houses, yet nobody will testify to having witnessed a murder committed, or will recognize a single man guilty of such a crime. If the ordinary forms of Turkish law cannot reach such criminals, extraordinary proceedings must be resorted to, and people proved guilty of plundering must be treated as having, at the same time, committed murder. Atrocities such as have been committed cannot go unpunished by such subterfuges as are attempted to turn aside the sword of justice. If other means cannot be devised, a hatti-sheriff should be published, condemning to death every one guilty of arson or robbery in the late outbreak at Damascus.

giving to the Court power to recommend to a less penalty than death such persons in whose favour strong extenuating circumstances can be adduced.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JAS. BRANT.

No. 136.

Consul Brant to Lord J. Russell.—(Received September 4.)

(No. 13.)

My Lord,

Damascus, August 13, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship a most interesting report, by Mr. Cyril Graham, on his visit to Hasbeya and Rasheya. It needs no addition to increase its interest, and it were needless to augment the horrors of the scenes Mr. Graham has so vividly described.

I can inform your Lordship that his Excellency Fuad Pasha has already taken measures to relieve these poor people from the fate with which they are threatened.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JAS. BRANT.

Inclosure in No. 136.

*Report by Mr. Graham on the Condition of the Christians in the Districts of Hasbeya and Rasheya.**

ON the 6th and 7th August such bad accounts were given me by certain natives of Hasbeya and Rasheya of the condition of the Christians in that district, that I determined upon visiting without delay both those towns, so recently the scene of horrible massacres.

On the 8th I had an interview with his Excellency Fuad Pasha and announced to him my intention, at the same time asking authority for removing, if necessary, the Christians from that country, or for making the best possible arrangements for their safety. The Pasha seemed delighted with my proposal, for he said he was extremely anxious to obtain accurate information of what was going on in that quarter, and hitherto he had been able to obtain no authentic accounts whatever. He immediately ordered me an escort, promised to be guided by my reports, in his future measures for the security of the country about Hermon, and placed at my disposal the sum of 20,000 piastres for distribution among the unfortunate Christians of the country I was about to visit.

I left Damascus that same evening, Wednesday, August 8th, and reached Rasheya the next morning. On arriving there I went to the house of the Druse Chief, Khazâi-el-Ariân, and immediately began my inquiries as to the number of Christians at that moment in the place, and as to the condition in which they were. I soon found that they were indeed in a miserable state; they had nothing to eat except what they owed to the bounty of the Druses, and that was little enough! The population amounted to 1,100 souls, whereof only 76 were men, all the remaining males having been killed, and some few having fled to Damascus and Beyrout. In order to distribute the funds committed to my care, I had all the women and children mustered, and then separated in divisions according to the quarters of the town they occupied, each division again was shut up in a house, and then one by one the women and children were admitted through the door at which I stood and placed in their hands money, so that I had an opportunity of ascertaining almost to an accuracy the number of the population at that moment at Rasheya. The Druses, however, soon became very jealous of this and came in numbers to ask what I was doing in their town, and what my object was in coming.

There are two Chiefs in Rasheya, one the above named Khazâi Agha-el-Ariân, the other Mohammed-en-Nasâr, whose name is mentioned with horror by all the Christians, as having been the chief instigator of, and chief actor in, the

* For the sequel to Mr. Graham's Report, dated the 22nd of August, see page 113.

massacre of the 11th June. He came to see me at the house of the other Chief, and a conversation ensued, from which it appeared that they still entertained the belief in common with most of the Druses, that the English Government must be extremely satisfied with what they had done, for they imagine that any diminution of the number of the Christians will be acceptable to us as weakening the French influence in the country! I soon undeceived them, and told them plainly that all the civilized world was horrified at their atrocious behaviour, and no people could have a greater abhorrence of their conduct during the last months than the English. They were then very anxious to learn all they could about a French occupation, and assured me that should the French land in Syria and attempt to penetrate into the interior, they would at once slaughter all the remaining Christians. The Chief Mohammed Nasâr then left me, and, on going out of the house, told some of my escort, Algerines belonging to the Emir Abd-el-Kader, that they, the Druses, would kill me as I had no good intentions towards them. He repeatedly told me he despised the Sultan and his Government, and that the Druses were a free people and defied any force which should be brought against them. That night I started for Hasbeya, and passing through Kfeir and Nimis, two villages in which almost all the Christian houses had been burned and some 110 Christians killed, I reached the other large town belonging to the district of Hermon, Hasbeya. Here I repeated my inquiries, numbered the women and children, distributed money, and received visits from the principal inhabitants. The whole number of Christians at that moment was 1,430, there having been only three months ago no less than 3,200; some few are in Beyrout and Damascus; but I fear that fully 1,300 were slaughtered. Here the Christians were in the same state of suffering as those whom I found at Rasheya, and in both places they were hourly in terror of a massacre, so excited had the Druses again become.

I visited the Serai, which was full of the corpses of the Christians; none had been buried, and, strange to say, the bodies were well preserved, having been parched by the burning Syrian sun. The sight was dreadful, bodies lying in every attitude on the paved court of the palace, the stones, naturally white, being stained a deep brown: but the upper rooms presented even a more horrible spectacle; in almost all of them the bodies were piled one upon another to the height of five or six feet, and lay just as they had fallen; to add to the horror of this frightful scene, the poor women followed me in, and began to howl and mourn over their dead; they led me from corpse to corpse, telling me how they had seen their brothers, fathers, husbands, sons, slaughtered before their eyes, and calling me to witness and to avenge their wrongs. The Druses who accompanied me made their jokes on the bodies, and one fellow showed me a pair of pistols set in silver, one of which had been broken in dashing the brains out of the Christians' heads. He lamented over his pistols and said, "Oh, that it should have been spoiled against their cursed hard skulls!"

Here again the Druses were more bold and insolent than I had ever seen them anywhere before. I have travelled over all their country, and even visited them in their strongholds in the Haurân, and have never met with anything but courtesy; now, however, they speak with great insolence, boast of the number of Christians they have killed, and assert that they will cut to pieces any force which shall be brought against them. The Emir Saad-ed-Din, who had been most obnoxious to the Druses, had his head cut off during the massacre, and his body thrown out under the walls of the Castle. It is said that the Druses on first entering the Serai began to cut the Christians to pieces, but some of them remarked, "If we do this we shall spoil their clothes, let us strip them and then kill them;" so, accordingly, after that, they stripped them and slaughtered them in cold blood. I made inquiries about the gun which the Commander of the troops had with him in the Serai at Hasbeya, how often it had been fired, &c. The Christians told me, it had been fired twenty-seven times, but all the balls had struck the houses of the Christian quarter; this was certainly the case; and on asking the Druses, they said, "Yes, it is true; Osman Bey intended to fire upon us, but he did not elevate his gun enough, so that it destroyed the Christians instead of us." Osman Bey had the doors of the Serai opened and in rushed the Druses and commenced their slaughter.

In the evening the Druses here again threatened my life, on which one of my escort had some words with them; two Druses thereupon fell upon him, and there would have been some bloodshed had not some others interfered. I then

returned through some of the other burned villages, where a few Christians were still struggling for their existence; coming back to Rasheya, where I visited the Serai, in which a second scene like that at Hasbeya presented itself, I again mounted and rode down to Damascus, where I arrived early on the morning of the 12th.

The result of my journey and of my inquiries was, that I ascertained the Christians to be in a state of great danger. No man dare go out of the towns. Each week several persons were maltreated and even killed. The Druses threaten to exterminate them altogether, should any attempt be made to remove them to Beyrout.

This day I have had another long interview with Fuad Pasha, have given him an account of my journey, and proposed to him that immediate measures should be taken either for the removal of the Christians about Hermon, amounting to full 2,600 souls, or for ensuring their safety if they are to remain there. In either case a considerable force will be required. At Rasheya I proposed that he should at once send to the Chief Khazâi-el-Ariân, who had conducted himself well, guarantee him full security if he would come to Damascus, and at the same time take measures with his own party for the protection of the Christians, thereby causing a division into two parties of the Druses of the town, which might enable the Pasha, by sending a certain number of troops, to protect the Christians against any mischievous attempt on the part of the Chief, Mohammed Nasâr.

This plan his Excellency adopted, and dispatched at once a messenger to the Sheikh Khazâi; he ordered also that 150 Algerines should start as soon as possible to protect Rasheya. A battalion of regular troops is also on the way from Beyrout to Hasbeya. It is very doubtful yet what may be the result of these movements; they may cause bloodshed, but it was a question, either of leaving the Christians entirely at the mercy of the Druses, who threatened—and we know enough of the Druses to believe it was not an idle threat—to exterminate men, women, and children, the moment the news should reach them of the landing of foreign troops,—or of running a certain risk in sending a body of troops to their support. I hope and trust that by a rapid movement the troops may come unexpectedly on these towns, occupy the Serais, and plant their guns there; in which case there is no further danger, as the Christians might all be gathered into the Serais, and the Druses would soon be dispersed by bringing the cannon to bear on their houses. The Pasha has shown such promptitude in preparing these measures that we may well hope for success. Should the position be found untenable, the Christians will then be taken under a strong escort to the sea-coast, whence they can escape to Egypt or Candia, as so many have done hitherto.

(Signed) CYRIL C. GRAHAM.

Damascus, August 13, 1860.

No. 137.

Consul-General Moore to Lord J. Russell.—(Received September 4.)

(No. 32.)

My Lord,

Beyrout, August 15, 1860.

WITH reference to that part of my despatch No. 31 reporting the continued disorders here notwithstanding the presence of Fuad Pasha, the large military force available, and the so-called peace between the Maronites and Druses, I beg to inclose the translation of a memorial I yesterday received from the Christians of Bekâa (Plain of Cœle-Syria), relating a horrible act of cruelty to two Christian women, of which the Druses have been guilty; as well as translations of two reports, dated respectively the 13th and 14th instant, addressed to me by Mr. Vice-Consul Abela, of Sidon, on the actual state of the neighbourhood of that town. In this district a Christian was murdered by Druses a few days ago under circumstances of great atrocity, in the village of Arsoon. All this passes almost under the eyes of the Turkish Authorities, who do nothing effectual to put an end to it. I have duly brought the facts to the knowledge of Admiral Martin, who has addressed written representations relative thereto to Fuad Pasha at Damascus, and to Mustapha

Pasha here. On my part, I am doing all I can in the interests of order and tranquillity. But little can be expected from authorities who, instead of doing their duty, act in the spirit of the Military Commander in Sidon, who, as reported by Mr. Abela in Inclosure No. 2, had the effrontery to request the Captain of the "Neptune" not to allow the officers of his ship to penetrate into the gardens, a couple of miles' walk from Sidon, as he could not answer for their safety, thus placing the town of Sidon with its garrison of regulars, and the Turkish man-of-war before it, at the mercy of a handful of Druse ruffians, who would disperse at a word spoken in earnest by him.

I have, &c.

(Signed) N. MOORE.

August 16.

P.S. Since the above was written, I am happy to be able to report that proper measures have been at last taken by the Turkish Authorities; the Governor of Sidon is to be recalled, the Commanders of troops at Sidon, and of those despatched to Hasbeya and at Rasheya under Hassan Bey (Colonel O'Reilly), as well as the battalion stationed on the limits of the Christian and Druse districts in the Lebanon, have received written orders to check the Druses, and if necessary to fire upon them.

N. M.

Inclosure 1 in No. 137.

The Christians of the Bekâa to Consul-General Moore.

(Translation.)

YOUR servants, the inhabitants and peasantry of the Bekâa and its villages, beg to submit to you that, at the commencement of the civil war between the Christians and the Druses in the Mountain, we your servants had petitioned Aashoor Effendi, Kaimakam of the Bekâa, and applied for protection, engaging to remain in our homes without interfering in the affairs of the Mountain and its disturbances, as we are subjects of the Porte, occupied in our own business, and had paid what was due by us to the Government, obedient in every respect to our authorities' orders, and avoiding all causes of contention. The reply from the said Kaimakam to our petition was, that he had submitted our application to his Excellency the Mushir at Damascus, but had received no answer as yet. We renewed several times the same request, and continued in that same position till the assassinations, plunder, and burning commenced in some of our places. We were still in our homes when Husni Bey, Colonel of the cavalry at Bâalbek, came to Mâalaka and sent for Sheik Kenj-el-Amad, the Druse Chief employed by the Government for the protection of the Bekâa. Sheik Kenj came to the Merj, a village in the Bekâa, and had an interview with the said Colonel Husni Bey, and the Kaimakam, Aashoor Effendi, which interview continued till sunset, then each of them went to a different point. In the same night Sheik Kenj-el-Amad went to the village of Gibgenin, where he met eight Christians, villagers of Kafarhooné, whom he deprived of their camels, mules, and all the property they had, and then killed them. On seeing this act we quitted our homes, leaving behind our property, and fled to Mâalaka, the residence of the Kaimakam, without bringing with us any of our property, cattle, &c., and stated to the Kaimakam, Colonel Husni Bey, and the military officers, all that had happened. The Kaimakam mounted immediately and went to the Bekâa, where our villages are situated, and passed through the district called Sharki-el-Bekâa, and so to the village of Karôn, on the verge of the Bekâa, and then returned. The same night all our villages in the Bekâa were burnt and plundered, and such persons as had remained in the villages, both old and young, including females and infants, were massacred. Girls were also violated—in short the horrors committed are unprecedented; our churches were demolished together with our houses; our animals were all driven off. All these atrocities were committed upon us without any cause on our part to entail the displeasure of the Porte or the Druses against us. We were compelled to flee from Mâalaka after repeated

fruitless representations for the protection of our blood and families. We are up to this moment scattered in the mountains, naked and hungry, as we do not possess the means of subsistence, enduring the bitterness of death. We find nobody to whom we can have recourse to but your illustrious Government, as it is the source of mercy, pity, and benevolence towards those who appeal to it. We presented a petition to his Excellency the Mushir at Beyrout, containing all we have ventured to state above, but without any answer beyond referring it to the Commission, who told us to go to our homes. But our homes are desolate, there is neither produce or crops, or security for our blood there; and moreover Sheik Kenj Amad, the Protector of the Bekâa, still frequents our villages, and he kills those whom he meets with; and especially eight days ago, two of our women went to their village of Sfeita, and were immediately seized and burnt alive; this, besides cutting down our plantations, and taking our silk and other crops. We have therefore nothing left to subsist upon in our villages, although we have paid our engagements to the Government on the same. We throw ourselves at the feet of your Government, and beseech it to consider our condition, for we are in a forlorn state, naked and hungry; death carries off numbers of us daily in consequence of our destitution. We venture to repeat our supplications for succour, &c.

(Signed by the Inhabitants of eight villages of the Bekâa.)

(Received August 14, 1860.)

Inclosure 2 in No. 137.

Vice-Consul Abela to Consul-General Moore.

(Translation.)

Sir,

Sidon, August 13, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to inform you, that the day before yesterday the woman of the village of Azoor, whose arm the Druses had broken, and not cut off, as I had stated, came here. The doctor of the "Neptune" is attending the poor woman. She told us that the Druses, after pursuing and breaking her arm, wanted to burn her, to force her to reveal the places where she had hidden her property, which she showed them had been already plundered. A girl who was with her was ill-treated, and menaced with violation, and had to escape during the night, and came here. These two women told me that another woman of El Soccos, who could not produce the property demanded of her, was tied by the Druses to the tail of mules, which dragged and kicked her till she died. These Druse ruffians are of the village of Mazraat-el-Shoof. Another woman arrived yesterday, from Djezzin, and says that 'Daher Osman, the Agent of said Bey Djomblat, has ordered that no Christian should be allowed to leave for Sidon, under pain of death to whosoever disobeyed.

The Captain of the "Neptune" called upon the Mudir of Sidon to take measures to check the disorders; but the latter told him that he could not act except within his jurisdiction, that is, about half an hour's distance round Sidon. More than this, the Colonel of the Garrison informed the Captain that security was still wanting in the neighbourhood of Sidon, and that, therefore, he, the Captain, should not permit his officers to penetrate into the gardens in the region of the River Awali.

These last two days the Mahometans evince a more fanatical feeling than was the case two or three weeks ago; though we have at present two vessels of war: what would they do if these vessels were to leave? In Iklim, Djezzin, Kharroob, Hasbeya, and Rasheya, the Druses continue to cut down the trees of the Christians.

In Deir-el-Kamar, where there is nothing but dead bodies and ruins, there is a company of troops, whilst in the Djezzin district, where so many miserable Christians are to be found, there is not one soldier to protect them.

The Druses still carry off the cattle and crops of the Christians in Gibâa; the Christians do not cease making their complaints thereof to the Nadir of the district, but he is indifferent, and extends no protection to the Christians.

In conclusion, it is seen that the state of disorders against the Christians

is unabated in the surrounding country, and that the Governors of the districts do nothing to restrain their course.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. ABELA.

Inclosure 3 in No. 137.

Vice-Consul Abela to Consul-General Moore.

(Translation.)

Sir,

Sidon, August 14, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to inform you that to-day a Christian woman of the village of Mehtekra, who had fled to Sidon for refuge, went with her daughter to the mill, on the River Awali, to grind some corn; on their return, on this side of the bridge, they were attacked by a Druse, who carried off the small quantity of flour they had, and stripped them of their clothes, loading them with the most horrible curses.

The Mussulmans of the Kharroob, who have plundered so much from Deir-el-Kamar, Zahlé, and the neighbourhood of Sidon, have been for the last two days engaged in transporting their booty to deposit it in the Metwali districts. The authorities here not only give no assistance in retaking and restoring to their Christian proprietors such plundered property as comes this way, but they do their best to prevent such restitution.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. ABELA.

No. 138.

Consul-General Moore to Lord J. Russell.—(Received September 4.)

(No. 34.)

My Lord,

Beyrout, August 16, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to report the arrival, this morning, of General d'Hautpoul, with two battalions of French troops, partly in the steamer of the Messageries Impériales, and partly in a Government transport. More transports with troops are in sight. The force is at this moment landing.

I beg to inclose extract of a letter I have just received from Mr. Cyril Graham, at Damascus. Your Lordship will perceive therefrom, and from Mr. Consul Brant's reports, that Fuad Pasha has as yet confined himself to half measures, which appear only explicable on the supposition of Mr. Graham as to the Pasha's policy, or of a feeling of weakness on the part of his Excellency.

Ahmed Pasha, the ex-Seraskier and Governor-General at Damascus, whose return to Syria I have already had the honour to report, has been sent on to Damascus, together with the other minor military officers arrested, to take their trial there. It is to be hoped that a proper trial, and an adequate sentence, will not only be passed, but also locally carried out, on these culpable public officers. I gravely doubt, however, whether Fuad Pasha, allowing him the good will, will have the power to carry into effect a sentence of capital punishment against the ex-Commander-in-chief, should such a penalty be his award. Such an event would shock every feeling of the Mahometan populace and soldiery to its very centre, and raise a storm of fanatical fury which it might be dangerous to evoke.

Another Austrian frigate, the "Radetska," has arrived, as well as another Dutch one, to-day, bearing the Dutch Admiral's flag.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. MOORE.

Mr. Graham to Consul-General Moore.

(Extract.)

Damascus, August 14.

NOTHING especially new to-day, but I may mention that the French and Russian Consuls, with both of whom I had a long conversation to-day, seem to be very much dissatisfied with Fuad's doings these last ten days; all the energy he showed in the beginning, they say, is gone.

I cannot help feeling the same, and I have no doubt he is now waiting to see how the discussions in Europe end. He will, if possible, regularly drive a bargain, and stipulate for the minimum number of executions which will satisfy the vengeance of Europe. This, I own, is the light in which it appears to me he views it. He never will re-establish permanent order—never. We must have an intervention, or no guarantee for the future can be obtained.

No. 139.

Major Fraser to Lord J. Russell.—(Received September 4.)

(No. 3.)

My Lord,

Damascus, August 16, 1860.

I ARRIVED at Damascus on the 11th instant, having passed Lebanon by the new carriage-road from Beyrout, on which a French company have been employed during the last year. This road is now tolerably complete, almost to the summit of Lebanon, with some detached portions beyond, so that, with about three weeks' work, it would be practicable for an army, as far the eastern side of the great plain of Bekâa (Cœle-Syria), whence troops could move without much difficulty, either north or south, for operations on the great plains of the interior. In the plain of Bekâa, the smoke was still rising from Zahlé, and numerous villages which had been burned, while parties of Moslems were scattered over the plain, carrying off, on camels, the crops of Christians who had fled or been killed.

I entered Damascus early in the morning, when I at once called upon the Consul, and delivered the letter with which I had been entrusted for him. I was struck by the sullen, scowling aspect of the people, in passing through the bazaar, showing that they were by no means cowed, although they may feel some alarm at the arrests being made. Yesterday, I waited upon his Excellency Fuad Pasha, to whom I was introduced by Mr. Brant. He informed me he had arrested 800 persons, of whom several were above the common rank; that they were undergoing trial, and that he would execute the sentence, whatever it might be. I said I was glad to hear that matters were proceeding to his Excellency's satisfaction, that the eyes of all Europe were upon him, and that a report of the due punishment of the miscreants of Damascus would be eagerly expected. He said that he could not act more rapidly than he was now doing, and that it was difficult to get evidence. I mentioned that the occasion was one which demanded summary proceedings; those of a military court, rather than the delays and quibbles of an ordinary law-court. He said he quite agreed, and had adopted such a course; that any reasonable evidence was admitted, even as far as that of a single Christian against a Moslem. I replied no more could be expected, and that it was therefore to be hoped that no assassin would escape punishment. His Excellency then mentioned, that he found his position a very difficult one, as, do what he might, he yet feared some European Government would not be satisfied. Had a certain course been indicated, he would have endeavoured to follow that course, even to executing such a number as might be demanded. I replied no European Government could indicate such a course, or make such a requisition; that his Excellency was the judge appointed by the Sultan, and all that European Governments could demand would be, that, as the crime had been so great, and shared by so many, the punishment should also be of so signal a nature as would not only satisfy justice in the meantime, but deter from like crimes in all time coming. He said that he felt his personal character to be at stake in this case, and that he would therefore confront all the difficulties of his position,

but that he required support and advice, and requested that I would give him mine. I said any service I could render was at his disposal, for, although I had no instructions whatever on the subject, I believed it to be the anxious desire of Her Majesty's Government to support him in the execution of the duty entrusted to him. His Excellency expressed his regret at the approaching arrival of a French force, and feared it would create much confusion in the country. I assured him that I did not think the French expedition would be permitted at present to mix itself up in the internal affairs of the country, and that, in any case, the surest mode to prevent any such intervention was to settle matters so thoroughly as to leave no excuse for such a movement. He said he feared excuses would nevertheless be found. I reminded his Excellency that an occupation would take place under a Convention, and that the French Government would be required to abide by its terms. He asked whether no English force would come; to which I replied that I had no information.

His Excellency's delay in commencing executions, many persons having already been condemned, his desire to be rid of foreign intervention, and his anxiety to have some definite indication of what would satisfy Europe, all cause me to think, that he is rather desirous to ascertain with how few condemnations Europe could be satisfied, than to secure and punish every criminal. This is perhaps not to be wondered at, for it is a serious step for a Moslem to put so many co-religionists to death for having killed Christians, an offence in their eyes certainly not worthy of death. Up to the present moment, although reports have begun to circulate in the city that some Moslems are likely to be executed on account of the late massacres, they yet believe it will be but a few, and that the remainder will be fined, sent to serve in the army, or punished in some other light manner.

I believe that encouragement, perhaps pressure, will be required to induce his Excellency to act up to the necessities of the present position. Any drawing back, or irresolution on his part, particularly if coupled with the non-arrival of the foreign expedition, now expected, may have a most disastrous effect in the country. I sincerely trust, therefore, that he will act with all the vigour which he has been generally believed to possess.

Achmet, late Pasha of Damascus, sent back from Constantinople most properly, will arrive here to-day, and immediately be brought to trial. I think there is little doubt that he will be condemned to death, so strong against him appear the various charges of complicity in the recent massacres, both in and out of Damascus.

I have suggested to Fuad Pasha to send from Beyrout a portion of the Ottoman troops there, to bring away the Christians yet among the Druses at Hasbeya, Rasheya, and neighbourhood; the troops to be accompanied by a well-known European or native Christian, to give confidence to the refugees. He has acted at once in this matter, and dispatched an officer last evening to see the measure carried out.

This morning he sent two Mudirs, or petty governors, direct to Hasbeya and Rasheya, to resume the functions of government at those places, furnishing them with a Proclamation, by which the Druse Chiefs are held responsible for the safety of the nearly 3,000 Christians yet in their district. This measure was very necessary, as we heard here yesterday that the Druses intended to detain the Christians as hostages, and were maltreating them.

His Excellency proposes to move against the Druses, when he has concluded his duties here, following them, if necessary, to the Haurân and Ledjah, and it is probable I may accompany him, unless events of more importance occur elsewhere. Once in the Ledjah, however, it might not be easy to get out while military operations continue; and in view of this contingency, and of the material change in the state of affairs in this country since I received your Lordship's instructions, I would be glad to know, whether it is still your Lordship's desire that I should return to England in two months from the date of my arrival in Syria, as already directed, or to be favoured with any other instructions that may be deemed necessary for my guidance, in the event of my remaining in this country.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. J. FRASER.

Lord J. Russell to Earl Cowley.

(No. 865.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, September 4, 1860.

I INCLOSE herewith to your Excellency copy of a report addressed to the Admiralty by the Admiral Commanding on the coast of Syria, stating that matters in that country are becoming worse instead of better, and detailing the steps which he had been obliged to take, in consequence of the misconduct of the Turkish authorities.

You will communicate the substance of this despatch to M. Thouvenel.

I am, &c.

(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

Inclosure 1 in No. 140.

Vice-Admiral Martin to the Secretary to Admiralty.

My Lord,

"Marlborough," Beyrout, August 16, 1860.

I REQUEST you will be pleased to inform the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty that, until to-day, nothing had occurred since my letter of the 8th instant, to alter very materially the apparent state of this country; and yet the prevailing feeling during the interval has been far less satisfactory than it was.

2. This proceeded from unrealized expectations of Fuad Pasha's activity and resolution, and not from any positive failure on his part, or from any fresh outbreak among the Mahometans. There has certainly been a seeming want of energy in his proceedings, not improbably occasioned by embarrassments consequent upon the expected arrival of foreign troops; for that expectation has given rise to a feeling indignation among the Moslem population, which, it is thought by many it may be difficult to control.

3. People have been looking for some heavy blow to fall upon the principal offenders in the recent atrocities; and that act of justice and vigour has not yet been announced. They also point to the disarming of the population of Damascus as an obviously necessary measure that has not yet taken place, and attribute to want of energy, or power, the neglect of a precaution so evidently essential.

4. Isolated cases of cruelty have been perpetrated upon the Christians by the Druses, and the Moslem population have resumed some of that insolence of demeanour which they manifested a few weeks ago.

5. The refusal of the Druses in Hesbeya and Rasheya to give up the Christian families whom they had detained as hostages for their own impunity for their late outbreak, induced Fuad Pasha to detach a regiment to those towns, to attempt the liberation of the captives. The success of this measure is by no means certain.

6. Still, however, until to-day all has been apparently quiet and unchanged. To-day circumstances of importance have taken place. A French regiment has arrived, and is now being landed, and information of a serious character has been received from Hasbeya and Rasheya. Mr. Graham, the English traveller, so celebrated for the generous interest he takes in these people, has just returned to Damascus from those two towns. He reports that the Christians, amounting to 1,300 in each town, are in the utmost danger from the violence of their implacable Druse enemies, by whom they are detained. Hundreds of the bodies of their slaughtered relatives he saw lying where they were killed; and he states that the distress of the women, and the dreadful evidences of the massacre around them, were the subject of brutal jests among the Druses.

He was assured by the Druses that these remnants of Christian communities would be slaughtered if foreign troops landed, and that they would themselves march to oppose the foreigners. For these unhappy Christians the utmost anxiety is, of course, felt, and the best hope for them is that their rescue may be effected by the sudden appearance of the regiment sent by Fuad Pasha.

7. I inclose copy of a letter received from Captain Campbell, of the "Neptune," now stationed at Sidon; a copy of a letter which, in consequence of Captain Campbell's letter, I wrote to the Governor-General of the Pashalic; and a copy of a letter I addressed on the same subject to his Excellency Fuad Pasha at Damascus.

8. My letter to the Governor-General at this place was answered personally by the Pasha commanding the troops, who came without loss of time to assure me that the Governor of Sidon should be forthwith dismissed.

I am, &c.

(Signed) WM. F. MARTIN.

Inclosure 2 in No. 140.

Captain Campbell to Vice-Admiral Martin.

Sir,

"Neptune," Sidon, August 13, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to inform you that the country in the vicinity of Sidon has not been so quiet during the last few days, and that Said Bey's promises of guaranteeing protection to such Christians as wished to return to their country dwellings, as mentioned in my letter of the 6th instant, have proved to be worthless.

About four days since two Christian women left this town by wish of their friends (who thought that their sex would preserve them from molestation) in order to discover whether the trees on their property, at the villages of Room and Aazoor, about four hours distant, had been destroyed by the Druses.

On arriving there three Druses (whose names are known) belonging to the village of Mayraat-el-Shoof, advanced towards them, and desired to be shown where their valuables were secreted. The women pleaded they had none, on which the Druses cruelly ill-treated them (breaking the arm of one), and finding that they still refused to show them their hidden things, made a fire, and were on the point of burning them; this proving too great a trial, they at once showed where they had buried their property before fleeing to Sidon, on which the Druses gave over molesting them (the youngest being insensible), and, after possessing themselves of everything, departed.

The women managed to crawl back here, after being two days on the road, and made known their story to the Vice-Consul; as I happened to be on shore at the time of their arrival, and the Governor of the town was near, in company with the Vice-Consul, I saw him, and told him all that had taken place, and urged upon him, as Governor of the town, the necessity of taking immediate steps towards punishing such an outrage.

The Governor stated that he could do nothing, as his jurisdiction only extended half a mile outside the town, and that he could not act without written orders.

I said all I could to combat this extraordinary statement of his, asking him whether the Porte did not consider the Christians here as under its protection, to which he replied, "Yes," but that he could not act.

I asked him in whose jurisdiction was the country half-a-mile beyond Sidon, to which he replied, the Druses. I have seen and conversed with the poor women, whom our surgeon attends; one of the women stated that, on the day she was ill-treated, the Druses took another woman from the village of Betteddin-el-Soccosh, and because she had no property to show them, they tied her to several mules, who ultimately kicked her to death. The Druses have been, and are still cutting down all the mulberry, fig, and olive trees they can lay hands on, and doing an enormous amount of damage. Mr. Abela, the Vice-Consul, is of opinion that the Mahometan population here have become more fanatically excited since hearing of the expected arrival of French troops, and that, were it not for the presence of some ships of war, they would be still more so. In the district of Djezzin, where there are upwards of 1,000 Christians, the Druse Daher Othman (agent of Said Bey) has forbidden any of them to flee to Sidon under penalty of death.

In that disturbed district there is not a single Turkish soldier, but at Deir-el-Kamar, which is now in ruins and depopulated, three companies of Turkish troops are stationed.

The Commander of the French screw brig-of-war "Sentinelle" informs me that he and his officers, when on shore, often meet with insults from the Mahometans. I have not, however, experienced any myself; perhaps from their being under the delusion that England will uphold them in all they do, and which they say openly.

Her Majesty's ship "Firefly," Commander Mansell, communicated with me on Saturday, the 1st, at 7.30 p.m., being *en route* to Caiffa.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. A. CAMPBELL.

Inclosure 3 in No. 140.

Vice-Admiral Martin to Mustapha Pasha.

Sir, "Marlborough," *Beyrout, August 14, 1860.*

IT is my duty to bring to your notice that a memorial has been put into my hands from the Christian inhabitants of the Bekaa, near Zahlé, complaining that, notwithstanding the orders of the Pasha, conveyed to them, to go to their homes, where no injury would be done to them, two of their females who went to that district, eight days ago, were burnt alive,—one by the Druses and the other by the Mahometans. The inhabitants state that their present misery is daily increasing, and beg that their unfortunate condition may be taken into consideration.

The state of the neighbourhood of Sidon will be conveyed to your Excellency in the inclosed copy of a despatch, just received from Captain Campbell of Her British Majesty's ship "Neptune," in which details respecting the state of anarchy there are given, and the extraordinary fact is revealed that the Governor of Sidon has no authority to act for the prevention of these barbarities, as the Government of that neighbourhood is still confided to the Druses,—the people who have been the authors and perpetrators of the atrocities committed in this country during the last two months.

You will observe, in Captain Campbell's letter, that the Druse Chief at Djezziz has forbidden any of the Christians to flee to Sidon, under penalty of death.

I would beg to know from your Excellency whether you can take immediate steps for the prevention of these lawless proceedings, or whether it is to be left to others to take such measures as may be considered necessary for the protection of the lives and property of Christians, who continue to be treated with the barbarity described in the memorial alluded to and in the despatch inclosed.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. F. MARTIN.

Inclosure 4 in No. 140.

Vice-Admiral Martin to Fuad Pasha.

Sir, "Marlborough," *Beyrout, August 14, 1860.*

I HAVE the honour to inclose, for your Excellency's information, the copy of a letter from the Captain of Her Britannic Majesty's ship "Neptune," now stationed at Sidon.

The letter represents facts and a condition of utter misrule which are in the highest degree discreditable to the local authorities, and eminently calculated to destroy the reputation of the Government they serve.

The information which the Captain of the "Neptune" has given, combined with other statements of the same character, when heard of in England and in Europe generally, will be considered as an evidence that no Government exists in Syria, and the conclusion must be that a Government is very urgently required.

I would entreat your Excellency to exhibit the power you have assured me you possess, by dealing with the Governor as an officer who has done his utmost

to screen the perpetrators of the most horrible and disgraceful outrages, to bring contempt upon the Sultan's Government, and, by his infamous misconduct, to defy yourself.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. F. MARTIN.

No. 141.

Lord J. Russell to Mr. Fane.

(No. 17.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, September 5, 1860.

AS the accounts which have lately been received from Syria are not altogether satisfactory, I have to instruct you to take an opportunity of stating to Count Rechberg that, in the opinion of Her Majesty's Government, if the second division of 6,000 men should be required in that province, according to the Convention concluded at Paris, Great Britain and Prussia might furnish 3,000 men each, and that Her Majesty's Government are quite ready to agree to a proposal to that effect, or to make it, if thought desirable.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 142.

Safvet Effendi to M. Musurus.—(Communicated to Lord J. Russell by M. Musurus, September 6.)

22 Aout, 1860.

DANS les dépêches successives que vous avez adressées au Gouvernement Impérial pour le tenir au courant de l'impression produite en Angleterre par les événements de Syrie, et l'informer des considérations dans lesquelles vous avez dû entrer pour relever les graves inconvénients qui résulteraient pour la tranquillité de l'Empire si le projet d'une intervention militaire étrangère venait à être exécuté, nous avons constaté avec reconnaissance que le Cabinet de St. James, tout en admettant, en principe, l'intervention en question, l'avait cependant subordonnée à l'acquiescement formel de la Sublime Porte.

De son côté, la Sublime Porte, sentant les dangers dont cette mesure se trouve entourée, n'a pas manqué de s'exprimer dans ce sens; et ce n'est que devant les conseils des Représentants et la perspective qu'on nous a montrée de voir les troupes étrangères débarquer sur notre territoire malgré le refus que nous aurions opposé à la conclusion d'une Convention, que nous avons été réduits à choisir entre deux maux le moindre.

En même temps que nous avons donné ainsi notre adhésion, nous nous sommes fait un devoir d'exposer franchement aux Puissances toutes nos appréhensions, et la suffisance des mesures que nous avons déjà prises. Ce que Fuad Pacha a fait à Damas en peu de jours, prouve que nous étions en force pour comprimer les désordres et pour punir les coupables. L'heureux début de notre Ministre des Affaires Etrangères nous fait espérer que le corps expéditionnaire ne trouvera, à son arrivée en Syrie, qu'un pays parfaitement pacifié et tranquille.

Or, si le débarquement des troupes Françaises s'opère sans qu'il soit justifié par aucune cause suffisante qui nécessite leur présence, à plus forte raison peut-on admettre qu'elles ne pourront avoir aucun motif plausible pour s'avancer dans l'intérieur du pays.

Nos efforts sont, à l'heure qu'il est, dirigés vers le but de circonscrire l'occupation à un point convenable du littoral, et d'obtenir qu'on ne le pousse pas dans l'intérieur. Si ce point peut être résolu comme nous le désirons, non seulement la pacification de la Syrie n'en serait que plus promptement et plus sûrement obtenue, mais il aurait encore l'avantage de neutraliser le dangereux effet de l'intervention militaire étrangère qu'il ne nous a pas été donné d'empêcher.

Major Fraser to Lord J. Russell. — (Received September 6.)

(No. 5.)

My Lord,

Damascus, August 23, 1860.

ON the 20th instant I had the honour briefly to report that the execution of the criminals condemned for participation in the massacre at Damascus had at length commenced. Of 167 persons condemned only 57 were found guilty of murder. These were hanged in the bazaars and public places of the city, at 10 o'clock in the night of the 19th instant. Amongst them were four or five persons above the common class, leaders of armed levies, in the pay of Government. Hardly 40 of the whole number of criminals belong to the ordinary population of the city.

On the afternoon of the 20th instant the remaining 110, who belonged to the irregular troops, and had been found plundering with arms in their hands, were shot, by parties of infantry of the line, without the city. The executions took place without public notice, and were witnessed by very few persons. The shops of the city have been very generally closed, and yet remain so.

I have since waited upon his Excellency Fuad Pasha, who then stated that sentence of death had been recorded against about 40 others, who had not yet been captured; that between 300 and 400 prisoners were being sent to Constantinople, 130 of whom were condemned to hard labour for life, the remainder to imprisonment and exile; and that he would, besides, levy a conscription of some 3,000 men for the army from among the youth of the city. He also mentioned that the trial of Achmet, late Pasha, and of other military officers, was concluded, and that other prisoners were before the Court, but that no sentence had yet been announced. I suggested, that if not more than 57 of those executed had been guilty of actual murder, the inference would be that the great bulk of those engaged in the massacre were yet free, as it was hardly to be supposed that upwards of 5,000 persons had been put to death, not to speak of women outraged and carried off, by 57, or even by 100 individuals, and that it was to be hoped the others would not escape.

He said that there were others still to be tried, and that arrests should continue as informations could be obtained, but that he found the greatest difficulty in procuring evidence; that he had been most anxious to ascertain whether any conspiracy had existed, as had been repeatedly asserted, but that hitherto his efforts had been fruitless, and that Achmet, late Pasha, utterly denied all knowledge of any such plot. There seems no doubt, however, in the minds of those who were best acquainted with what was passing in the city previous to the outbreak, that, if not a formal conspiracy, at least a general understanding in favour of a massacre existed among the leaders of public opinion in the city. The Emir Abd-el-Kader, with whom I had an interview yesterday, asserts it. He states, moreover, that, in his own mind, he divided the city into twenty-four parts; of these, twenty were actively inciting to a massacre; of the remaining four parts, three and a half wished such an event, but did not excite, and the remaining half portion alone were really opposed to such a proceeding; that, when he went to the Great Council, while the massacre was taking place, and spoke to them, he was obliged to leave in disgust, for they went on smoking their pipes and would do nothing.

Fuad Pasha further mentioned having arrested three persons of station, the day before yesterday, viz., the principal Sheikh of the great Mosque, who had been very busy exciting the people, named Abdullah-el-Halebi; also, Mohammed Saïd Bey, the influential leader of a band of villanous Koordish irregulars; and Gluzi Effendi, a principal member of the Great Council, and a man of very fanatical disposition. I may here mention, that Fuad Pasha's Secretary, who called upon me this morning, states, that, from fear of the future consequences to any informer, the Pasha has not yet been able to obtain an accusation against Sheikh Abdullah. I know that on the morning of his arrest, a large body of women, belonging to the families of the men executed, marched in a body to his house, screaming and

execrating against him, to the alarm of all the neighbourhood, as the cause of their husbands' and relatives' death, in having incited them to rise against the Christians. Yet the Government have not been able to procure evidence against him.

His Excellency mentioned, that some forty Christians, who had been forced to become Mussulmans to save their lives, had been brought in, at his request, from a village; that they had been told they were free to return to their own faith, which they declared to be their wish, and that they have returned to their village Christians. His Excellency having stated that the city was struck with terror since the executions, I replied, that the terror was not universal, as, within my own knowledge, parties of men had come, in open day, to the house of the American Consul, and that only yesterday, and cursed the Consul and his religion, assuring him that he need not think Fuad Pasha would be always at Damascus to protect him. The same had also been done to the Emir Abd-el-Kader, and Europeans had been cursed and insulted in the public bazaar. He seemed surprised, and said he should wish to discover these persons. I said, I believed the American Consul could give the names of some. I suggested whether it would not be well to make it generally known that such conduct would be treated as a grave offence, as tending to disturb the public peace. He said it should be done at once. His Excellency had said that the Damascenes disliked even the Turks, and that it was necessary to strike terror into them to confirm the Ottoman rule, as well as on account of late events. I fully agreed in this, feeling, as I do, that it never was more evident than now, that the Sultan rules in Syria only in virtue of the feuds and mutual distrust of its various sects and races, and that the country has yet to be subjugated. I stated, that in respect of striking terror, it seemed to me a deeper effect would be produced in the city by detaining here, in the meantime, the prisoners about to be sent to Constantinople, the publication of their sentence being delayed for a time, as it was very undesirable the citizens should think the minor punishments had already commenced. His Excellency said he had not sufficient prison accommodation, though I should think this might easily have been arranged.

In the same view, I mentioned, that if his Excellency felt himself strong enough to put down any demonstration, it might be well that the executions should be more public, take place at a fixed hour in the day time, and that it should be publicly announced for what crime the criminals were executed, it not having, hitherto, been the practice here to punish Moslems capitally for the murder of Christians. His Excellency said that a paper was attached to the breast of each culprit, stating his crime, though, as few natives can read, even if they would approach at all, this serves little purpose. He added, that he had so little efficient assistance, every thing could not be so well arranged as might be desired; that all the work fell upon him, from the first examination of the charge, even to the final details of execution. This is, no doubt, too true, for the new Governor, Mohammed Pasha, to whom I referred in a previous Report, is as useless here as he proved at Smyrna; and, it is said, he will shortly leave, on the plea of bad health. The paucity of efficient instruments, however, renders it exceedingly doubtful whether, even under a greatly ameliorated system, a satisfactory rule can be maintained in Syria by Ottoman officials alone.

His Excellency referred to the terms of the recent Convention, and seemed gratified that the foreign troops were to hold themselves at his disposal, a fact just announced to him by the French General in command of the force now arriving at Beyrout. His Excellency also expressed much regret at being detained so long at Damascus, as there was yet much to do with the Druses, and the rainy season was not very distant. He did not think it would be necessary to call on the French troops to act in the interior.

There has been no recent disturbance anywhere in the neighbourhood of Damascus, though an isolated murder of a Christian yet occurs occasionally. In the city, Christians cannot yet walk about without a guard or Moslem protector, without being subject to insult, and none yet ventures beyond the walls. Still there is a very general alarm, particularly since the arrest of the three persons of station mentioned above. The Koordish quarter, in particular is almost totally deserted by the men, who fled immediately the first executions became known. The Emir Abd-el-Kader, when I asked his opinion of the steps Fuad Pasha had taken, replied, "Ten times the number

executed yesterday must die before an effect will be produced on the Damascenes, and if this be not done, the Sultan's rule will be powerless in Syria."

Of the movements of the Druses little is known here, except that the Chief, Said Bey Jumblatt, has been in the plain of Bekâa, within the last few days, collecting corn and money among his tenants and others, and seizing the property of all who cannot furnish these. This property has been sent to the southern end of Mount Hermon (Jebel-es-Sheikh), apparently for transport to the Haurân, whither it is now reported the Druses propose to retire quietly, and wait till the storm has passed. Said Bey has been addressing repeated letters to Fuad Pasha, to Abd-el-Kader, and to Mr. Brant, the English Consul here, containing no proposition, but that he has been doing his best to prevent evil, his object evidently being to procure a reply that might indicate in what light he is regarded. In this, however, he has hitherto been foiled.

It is believed that the Christians in the Druse districts will now be withdrawn without opposition, as well as a native Bey (Ali Bey, of Tibni), having left some days ago for that purpose.

There are still about 8,000 Christians here. Fuad Pasha assures their safety, and has evacuated a Mussulman quarter for them, where they are now being housed. His Excellency informed me on my arrival that the French and Russian Consuls had been urging their instant departure, and seemed to think they had some ulterior object in view. Knowing the misery to which they must be exposed in Beyrouth, already so overcrowded, from which I had just arrived, I could not but think so too. I therefore proposed that his Excellency should assure their safety, and provide quarters and food for them, as has been done; and that Mr. Brant and I should try to persuade them to stay. They have now generally agreed to do so, the French Consul having withdrawn his opposition. It is hoped the Russian Consul will do the same; but if not, as their present quarters are good, I do not think he will be able to influence them. It was very desirable to stop a hasty flight, that might have produced a panic, with its accompanying evils, elsewhere.

Having now been at Damascus nearly a fortnight, and having heard many accounts of the conduct of individuals during the period of terror, I think it will be gratifying to your Lordship to learn, notwithstanding what has been stated in some French telegrams, that all disinterested persons concur in stating that the English Consul was the only official who showed himself, and always undaunted, during the reign of universal terror, when he repeatedly ventured, at the eminent risk of his life, to pass through the streets to the palace, where he entreated and urged the Pasha to interpose to prevent the wholesale destruction of life. Although unsuccessful in this respect, the self-sacrificing efforts he then made have been deeply appreciated, and he was undoubtedly instrumental in saving many lives. I am glad to be able to state that he appears in good health, notwithstanding all his recent harassing anxieties and exertions.

I have thus entered into many details, which may, perhaps, appear trifling, and in a somewhat informal manner; but considering my communications to your Lordship to be of a confidential nature, I have thought it better to represent things, however plainly, yet exactly as they are, rather than trouble your Lordship with a more formal document, which might be less satisfactory as regards information. I therefore humbly trust that the mode I have adopted may not meet with your Lordship's disapproval.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. J. FRASER.

No. 144.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received September 6.)

(No. 1,172.)

My Lord,

Paris, September 5, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship, that the Convention sanctioning and regulating the French expedition which has been sent to Syria on behalf of the Five Powers, was signed this morning, and I transmit herewith the original, destined for the Queen's ratification.

I have, &c.

(Signed) COWLEY.

No. 145.

Lord Dufferin to Lord J. Russell.—(Received September 7.)

(No. 3.)

My Lord,

Therapia, August 24, 1860.

I BEG to inform your Lordship that yesterday I had the honour of being presented to the Sultan by his Excellency Sir Henry Bulwer.

His Majesty was pleased to give me a most gracious reception, and was good enough to say, that he was glad to have an opportunity of seeing me before my departure for Syria.

He then expressed in a most energetic manner his horror of what had taken place there, and concluded by assuring me of the sense he entertained of the friendly feeling which had always been evinced towards him by Her Majesty's Government.

I have, &c.

(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANBOYE.

No. 146.

M. Musurus to Mr. Hammond.—(Received September 4.)

Mon cher M. Hammond,

6, Bryanston Square, le 8 Septembre, 1860.

JE me fais un plaisir de vous envoyer le résumé ci-joint de quelques dépêches de son Excellence Fuad Pacha, contenant des détails qui, quoiqu'ils ne soient pas d'une date bien récente, ne vous paraîtront peut-être pas sans intérêt.

Votre, &c.

(Signé) C. MUSURUS.

Inclosure in No. 146.

Résumé of Despatches from Fuad Pasha, to the 23rd of August.

(Traduction du Turc.)

D'ABORD, pour arrêter d'un coup les auteurs et complices des atrocités commises, la ville de Damas a été divisée en dix cercles. Dans chacun de ces cercles un détachement de troupes Impériales a été stationné, et une Commission y a été instituée, composée de notables de la ville et présidée par un officier supérieur de l'armée. Enfin, un cordon militaire a été établi tout autour de la ville, de manière que tous les habitants se sont trouvés ainsi subitement placés sous la main redoutable de la force armée. Puis, on a procédé, dans chacun de ces cercles, à l'arrestation des coupables et à des perquisitions pour recouvrer les effets enlevés. C'est en conséquence de ces mesures qu'en un seul jour, et sans coup férir, 428 coupables ont été arrêtés; qu'une partie des effets pillés, pouvant évaluer à 6,000 ou 7,000 charges de cheval, a été recouvrée, et que, de plus, outre les effets qui avaient été jetés dans la rue pendant la nuit, une quantité considérable en a été restituée aux Commissions.

Les auteurs des meurtres et du pillage ont été renvoyés par devant la Cour Extraordinaire de Justice pour subir l'interrogatoire nécessaire, et pour être jugés et condamnés à des peines proportionnées au degré de culpabilité du chacun. Ceux des individus compromis qui auront été reconnus n'avoir pas pris personnellement une part active aux crimes perpétrés, seront renvoyés de la ville en exil indéfini. Ceux qui auront été condamnés aux travaux forcés et aux galères seront dirigés sur Beyrouth pour être embarqués sur les vaisseaux Impériaux et envoyés dans des localités convenables afin d'y subir leur punition. Des soulagements ont été prodigués avec promptitude aux habitants victimes de ces malheureux événements.

Quant aux malades et aux blessés, ils ont été placés dans l'Ecole Militaire convertie en hôpital, et où ils sont soignés et assistés de toute manière.

Toutes les mesures sus-mentionnées ont reçu leur complète exécution en peu de jours; et, au fur et à mesure que les différentes punitions prononcées

par la Cour Extraordinaire seront infligées, le résultat en sera communiqué à la Sublime Porte.

L'ordre et la tranquillité la plus parfaite règnent à Alep, à Jérusalem, et dans le reste de la Syrie.

No. 147.

Lord Bloomfield to Lord J. Russell.—(Received September 10.)
(No. 334.)

My Lord,

Berlin, September 8, 1860.

ON the receipt yesterday of your Lordship's despatch No. 163 of the 2nd instant, I saw M. de Gruner, the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and informed him with reference to the instructions to the Commissioners in Syria, that in order to secure unanimity it was the opinion of Her Majesty's Government that the Representatives at Constantinople should be desired to act in concert with regard to any special instructions which they may think it advisable to transmit to Syria, rather than to add a paragraph to that effect to the instructions already sent to the Commissioners.

At M. de Gruner's request I read to him your Lordship's above-mentioned despatch, and he begged me to leave it with him for the purpose of comparing its contents with the instructions addressed to the Prussian Agents on the subject, which I did, conceiving that no inconvenience could result from this confidential communication.

I returned to-day to M. de Gruner when he said that he had examined the instructions to Count Goltz, which had already left Berlin a week ago for Constantinople, and that with an anxious desire to meet the wishes of Her Majesty's Government he did not see how it was now possible to alter the additional paragraph which had been already inserted in the instructions.

M. de Gruner appears equally desirous with Her Majesty's Government to ensure unanimity both amongst the Representatives at Constantinople and the Commissioners in Syria, and a despatch will be forwarded to Count Bernstorff to-day in answer to the communication which I have made to the Prussian Government.

I have, &c.
(Signed) BLOOMFIELD.

No. 148.

Lord J. Russell to Consul Brant.

(No. 5.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, September 10, 1860.

I HAVE received your despatches to No. 13 of the 13th ultimo inclusive, and I have to acquaint you that Her Majesty's Government entirely approve the judicious conduct pursued by you during the late disastrous events which have taken place in Syria.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 149.

Lord J. Russell to Consul Brant.

(No. 6.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, September 10, 1860.

MR. CYRIL GRAHAM appears from his report, of which a copy is inclosed in your despatch No. 13 of the 13th ultimo, to have behaved with great courage, sense, and humanity on the occasion of his late visit to Hasbeya and Rasbeya, and I have to instruct you to convey to that gentleman the thanks of Her Majesty's Government for his exertions on behalf of the distressed Christians in that district.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 150.

Mr. Hammond to Major Fraser.

Sir,

Foreign Office, September 10, 1860.

I AM directed by Lord John Russell to acquaint you that his Lordship approves of your proceedings as reported in your despatch No. 3 of the 13th ultimo.

I am further to state to you that Lord John Russell would wish you to remain in Syria until the 10th of October.

I have, &c.
(Signed) E. HAMMOND.

No. 151.

Mr. Hammond to Major Fraser.

Sir,

Foreign Office, September 12, 1860.

I AM directed by Lord John Russell to acquaint you that his Lordship approves of your proceedings as reported in your despatch No. 5 of the 23rd ultimo.

I have, &c.
(Signed) E. HAMMOND.

No. 152.

Lord J. Russell to M. Musurus.

M. l'Ambassadeur,

Foreign Office, September 12, 1860.

I HAVE duly received the communication which your Excellency made to me on the 6th instant of a despatch from Safvet Effendi, dated the 22nd of August, respecting the limits to be prescribed to the employment of foreign troops in Syria, and I have the honour to state to your Excellency, with reference to the observations contained in that despatch, that when the Turkish officers who were consenting parties to the massacres perpetrated in Syria have been tried and punished, I shall be prepared to discuss the question as to the manner in which the foreign troops sent to that country shall be employed.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 153.

Consul Brant to Lord J. Russell.—(Received September 13.)

(No. 14.)

My Lord,

Damascus, August 24, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Lordship's despatch No. 1, desiring me to express, in suitable terms, the thanks of Her Majesty's Government to his Highness the Emir Seyed Abd-el-Kader for his noble exertions in saving the lives of Christians on the occasion of the massacre of Damascus.

I have peculiar satisfaction in performing this duty, and I trust your Lordship will approve the terms of the recognition of his meritorious services by Her Majesty's Government, as expressed in my letter to his Highness of this day's date, copy of which I have the honour to inclose.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JAS. BRANT.

Inclosure in No. 153.

Consul Brant to the Emir Abd-el-Kader.

To his Highness the Emir Seyed Abd-el-Kader,

I HAVE been charged by the Government of Her Britannic Majesty to express to your Highness the high sense they entertain of the services rendered to the cause of humanity by your Highness in saving the lives of so many Christians, who must otherwise have perished by the hands of their cruel enemies in the late massacre at Damascus.

In your Highness's conduct, Her Majesty's Government acknowledge the difference between the high-minded Mohammedan Prince and the cowardly bigot who unfortunately controlled the fate of so many defenceless victims of fanaticism.

I consider it a high honour to have been made the channel of communicating the sentiments of Her Majesty's Government on such an occasion, entertaining, as I do, deep feelings of admiration at having witnessed your Highness's exertions in favour of so many persecuted people.

I have, &c.

(Signed) JAS. BRANT.

Damascus, August 24, 1860.

No. 154.

Consul Brant to Lord J. Russell.—(Received September 13.)

(No. 15.)

My Lord,

Damascus, August 25, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship copies of despatches which I have lately addressed to his Excellency Sir H. L. Bulwer.

Up to this time no sentence has been passed on the ex-Mushir Ahmet Agha, nor on the other officers of the garrison now on their trial by the Military Court.

Fuad Pasha maintains great secrecy as to his intentions, and until his plans are carried into effect they remain unknown; meantime rumour is active, and reports of all kinds are circulated, some turn out good guesses, but most of them are improbable or totally without foundation. I think it best to abstain from relating what is not authentic, or what I consider doubtful. No more executions have taken place.

The Christians still in the Castle, estimated at about 8,000, are about to be lodged in Mohammedan houses in three of the quarters of the town which are to be entirely given up to them, and protected by a guard. The Local Government will not, therefore, in future furnish animals to convey them to the coast.

The public tranquillity has not been disturbed, but the fears of the Christians are constantly renewed by rumours, and they hardly dare resolve on staying here; gradually I trust they will regain their courage, but it will take a long time.

The public health is good.

I have, &c.

(Signed) JAS. BRANT.

Inclosure 1 in No. 154.

Consul Brant to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Damascus, August 16, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that the ex-Mushir arrived last night under the name of Ahmet Agha, and was immediately brought before a Commission to be examined; the examination was renewed this morning. Through this channel his Excellency Fuad Pasha expects to be able to ascertain whether the outbreak was a plot concocted long beforehand,

or whether it was only suppressed fanatical feeling which burst out through the occurrence of purely accidental circumstances.

Daas Agha, a partisan Chief, who was given the rank of Ubashee in the Aunieh Irregular Horse, by the late Mushir, was arrested in the city two days ago.

The Mushir, with a strong body of troops, went out to Jeroud, where his family has long possessed large estates and great influence. A good deal of plunder was found in his house, which was brought into Damascus. His residence was burned with ten others of influential persons who had been laying the neighbouring villages under contribution and vexing the Christians.

Yesterday four Mussulmans from the Hauran were executed. They sometime since murdered thirteen persons who went to reap the harvests at the villages of Sanamein and Kanakir.

I anticipate that Fuad Pasha will immediately commence executing some of the criminals condemned, and I have no doubt his doing so will strike terror into the population. The Mussulmans will not yet believe that any executions can result from the murder of infidels; when that is made clear to their mind, many will change their tone and conduct, and make revelations which they at present withhold.

I have, &c.

(Signed) JAS. BRANT.

Inclosure 2 in No. 154.

Consul Brant to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Damascus, August 16, 1860.

I HAD the honour to receive your Excellency's despatches Nos. 6 and 7, and at the same time a communication from Mr. Consul-General Moore, inquiring what proportion of the sum placed at his disposal should be appropriated to the sufferers of Damascus.

With respect to my immediate wants, occasioned by the crowd of refugees under my roof, I ventured to draw on Her Majesty's Government 250*l.*, and as at this moment only a few remain, I am not in want of funds.

There are a great many refugees in the Castle, who have been hitherto supplied with food and clothing, partly by the local authorities and partly by the French Consulate, with some aid on a lesser scale by the Russian. The numbers have now diminished from between 14,000 and 15,000 to between 8,000 and 10,000, and these will probably be sent off in two or three divisions in the course of eight or ten days. The French and Russian Consuls are urging them to depart, with what view I do not understand, for their position on arriving at Beyrout is likely to be worse than it is here. Fuad Pasha provides half an oke (12*lbs.*) of bread daily, and 50 paras in money (2*d.*) to each grown-up individual. The Consuls allege that his Excellency's orders with regard to these supplies are not punctually obeyed, and that the people suffer from this irregularity. Fuad Pasha offered to remove the Christians in the Castle to private houses, which they declined, preferring to leave the city. The people themselves some days since were disposed to remain, hearing from those who had left of the sufferings endured both on the road and at Beyrout. But the persistence of the Consuls in pressing their departure has altered their views, as they think there must be a strong motive for the advice, so that at present none of the refugees seem disposed to remain behind. If they continue in their present determination, a little money to provide them food for the journey might be still applied, or if any will remain, some additional allowance could be furnished to assist the small pittance made by the Local Government. I have consulted with the Missionaries on this matter, who would lend me their assistance to carry out the distribution of the bounty, and I have also consulted Major Fraser and Mr. Cyril Graham, and I wait to see whether any refugees can be induced to accept the Pasha's offer of houses.

I have, &c.

(Signed) JAS. BRANT.

Inclosure 3 in No. 154.

Consul Brant to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Damascus, August 20, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to report to your Excellency that I have just learned by a communication from his Excellency Fuad Pasha, that 57 criminals have been hanged this morning in different parts of the city, and 110, partly belonging to the Bashi-Bozouk horsemen, and partly to the Irregular Cavalry, called Annieh, were shot at the Genk Meidan, just outside the town.

The trial of persons arrested is continuing, and his Excellency promised to furnish me with a list of all those who are or may be condemned, as well as with the names of those who have escaped for the present, but who have been condemned by contumacy.

The ex-Seraskier, Ahmet Agha, has been tried, but his sentence is not yet published. Osman Bey, the Commander of the troops at Hasbeya, is under trial.

The people of the town are stricken with terror; they evidently never contemplated what has happened, and are trembling at what may still be impending.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JAS. BRANT.

Inclosure 4 in No. 154.

Consul Brant to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Damascus, August 22, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to report to your Excellency, that yesterday I was invited by Fuad Pasha to pay his Excellency a visit, as he happened to be at leisure. Major Fraser accompanied me, and the French Consul joined us soon after. The conversation naturally turned on the events of the preceding day. His Excellency informed me, that about forty criminals had been condemned by contumacy. He announced to us also, the arrest of Sheikh Abdallah-el-Halebee, the Chief of the Ulema of Damascus, considered by the inhabitants in the light of a saint, but in reality a mischievous fanatic and intriguer; although he seeks his pecuniary interest by fraud and chicanery, yet he exercises immense influence over the people. His arrest produced a great sensation. Another influential person, Mufti Ghuzee Effendi, was likewise taken, he was a member of the Ulema, as well as of the Great Medjlis, was extremely fanatical, and by his age, standing, and position, possessed influence, which he chiefly used to gain money.

Mohammed Saïd Bey was also arrested; he is the son of Shamdeen Agha, the chief Koord in the place, a man of about 90 years of age, and very rich. Mohammed Saïd was made a Mirallai by Ahmed Pasha, to the great disgust of the regular army. He had the command of 500 horsemen of the Annieh Irregulars: I do not know exactly of what he may be accused, but as a Koord he enjoyed a bad reputation. About 300 persons condemned to the Bagnio for life, leave this evening for Beyrout on their way to Constantinople; 2,000, or perhaps 3,000, will be sent to the capital, to be enrolled in the army. How many more executions will take place is not decided; trials are continually going on, as well as arrests.

About 200 Christian families are lodged in a Turkish quarter of the city called Kanawat, one of the best divisions of the town, and close to the Serai. A great many Christians are still in the Castle, and are reluctant to leave it, but probably in a few days they may take courage, and decide on accepting the proffered houses.

We spoke to his Excellency Fuad Pasha as to the advisability of confiscating the property of the condemned, after legal claims on it have been satisfied, in order to compensate the Christians for their losses. His Excellency said that confiscation was no longer legal, but it was observed that such a case as the present was exceptional, and it would be a perversion of justice to allow the

families of criminals to be enriched by their plunder. His Excellency did not seem to have well considered the case, but it will be advisable to renew the subject another time.

I received late last evening your Excellency's confidential despatch of August, as well as a circular of August, inclosing the circular of 6th August to Her Majesty's Consuls in Europe. I shall, after attentively considering these communications, reply at a future time; meanwhile, I cannot refrain from expressing how gratefully I appreciate your Excellency's indulgent approbation of my conduct.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JAS. BRANT.

No. 155.

Consul Brant to Lord J. Russell.—(Received September 13.)

(No. 16.)

My Lord,

Damascus, August 25, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship copy of a memorandum sent me by order of his Excellency Fuad Pasha, giving up to the 22nd August, the numbers of the persons on whom punishment has been inflicted for their participation in the massacre and plundering of the Christians of Damascus.

I should hope that Fuad Pasha does not yet think of concluding his researches, as many individuals known to have been implicated in the massacre and plundering are still at liberty, and have not even been questioned, and yet his Excellency seems to have relaxed in his energy, and apparently to consider that sufficient has been done.

For my own part, I fear that the people have not been sufficiently intimidated by the examples made, and that they might again repeat similar scenes with more pitiless cruelty and malignity under a weak Governor.

I cannot perceive what sufficient guarantee can be given for a vigorous administration, if future Governors of the Province are to be chosen from the class of Pashas, all the members of which seem so totally inefficient.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JAS. BRANT.

Inclosure 1 in No. 155.

M. Danisch to Fuad Pasha.

M. le Consul,

Damas, le 23 Aout, 1860.

J'AI l'honneur de vous transmettre, ci-près, une note relatant le nombre de personnes condamnées à la peine capitale, aux travaux forcés à perpétuité, à l'exil, ou aux travaux forcés pour un tems déterminé, suivant leurs degrés de culpabilité dans les déplorables affaires dont Damas a été dernièrement le théâtre.

Comme le Tribunal Extraordinaire institué d'office par son Excellence Fuad Pasha s'occupe avec activité de l'interrogatoire des prisonniers qu'on n'a pu encore examiner, la liste définitive et détaillée des personnes jugées et à juger vous sera communiquée officiellement, aussitôt que ce Tribunal aura terminé ses travaux.

Agréer, &c.
(Signé) DALAGGIO DANISCH,
Secrétaire de son Excellence Fuad Pasha.

Inclosure 2 in No. 155.

List.

Personnes condamnées à mort, comme ayant assassiné directement des Chrétiens, et qui ont été pendues	56
Id. condamnées à mort pour avoir pris part à l'émeute, armes à la main, et qui, en leur qualité de soldats auxiliaires, zaptiés et bachi-bozouks, ont été fusillés	111
Id. condamnées au bagne à perpétuité comme ayant pris part à l'émeute, les armes à la main, et qui ont été envoyées à Constantinople	139
Id. condamnées à l'exil, comme ayant pris part au pillage, sans armes	145
Id. condamnées aux travaux forcés pour un tems déterminé et retenues à Damas pour être employées aux travaux des routes	186
Id. condamnées à mort par contumace et qui seront exécutées au fur et à mesure qu'elles tomberont entre les mains de la justice	83
Total	720

No. 156.

Consul-General Moore to Lord J. Russell.—(Received September 13.)

(No. 37.)

My Lord,

Beyrout, August 31, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to inclose copy of my despatch of the 29th instant to Her Majesty's Ambassador at the Porte, reporting occurrences of public interest since my last despatches to your Lordship.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. MOORE.

Inclosure in No. 156.

Consul-General Moore to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, August 29, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to report that General d'Hautpoul, Commander-in-chief of the French expedition, wishing, it is understood, to have an interview with Fuad Pasha, is to start to-day or to-morrow for Damascus, with a Turkish military escort, placed at his disposal by the latter.

The transport "Ganges," conveying the 800 troops and officers still wanting to bring up the force to its stipulated numerical strength (6,000) is not yet arrived, and anxiety is felt at the cause of the delay.

Mr. Vice-Consul Abela reports that upwards of 1,000 Christians of Hasbeya, Rasheya, and the surrounding villages, have safely reached Sidon, under escort.

The Druse position is not changed since my last report, beyond the reported departure of considerable numbers of Druses from the Shoof and Arkoob for the Hauran.

Isolated acts of aggression on their part against Christians and their property continue.

I am informed that a memorial to me from the Druse Chiefs is in preparation, appealing to Her Majesty's Government for protection against unfair treatment or persecution, and throwing themselves entirely upon their justice and consideration.

There are indications of a French movement, having for object the establishment of sole Christian rule in the Lebanon, the ruler to be a Shehab, and Emir Mejid or Emir Kais, the person to be chosen for the office. I beg to refer your Excellency to my despatch of the 31st of May last, for a notice of the first-named Emir.

I will watch carefully over the further development of this movement, and keep your Excellency informed of its progress and details.

About 280 Damascenes, condemned by Fuad Pasha to the galleys, some for life and others for a term of years, arrived at Beyrout a few days ago on their way to Constantinople. They were embarked on board the "Shadié," Turkish screw line-of-battle-ship. They passed under the Consulate, handcuffed and guarded by military.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. MOORE.

No. 157.

Consul-General Moore to Lord J. Russell.—(Received September 13.)

(No. 38.)

My Lord,

Beyrout, August 31, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to inclose copy of a despatch I have received from Mr. Vice-Consul Rogers, of Caiffa, transmitting the copy of a placard, in Arabic, that was posted over the door of the Greek Church at Acre, of which the inclosed is a translation.

This scurrilous production, though unimportant in itself, is of value as indicative of the state of Mahommedan feeling.

I have brought the matter to the knowledge of Ahmet Pasha, who promises to direct an inquiry into it. The Authorities at Acre declined to take any notice of the affair when laid before them by the Greek Bishop of the town, telling him to produce the authors.

With reference to my despatch of the 29th instant to Her Majesty's Ambassador at the Porte (inclosure in No. 37 to your Lordship), I beg to report that General d'Hautpoul has since changed his mind about proceeding to Damascus in person, and sent Staff-Colonel D'Osmond in his stead, and that the "Ganges" transport has been heard of as having put in at Navarino for repairs.

In inclose, for your Lordship's perusal, some copies of a Report of the Beyrout Relief Committee on their operations hitherto, with details which will doubtless interest your Lordship. The number of destitute refugees at Beyrout has now risen to upwards of 20,000.

I am informed that a memorial on the part of the Christians of Syria to the Emperor of the French is in course of preparation, conveying the thanks of the Christians to His Imperial Majesty for the military succour he has sent them.

From Damascus there is nothing new since Mr. Consul Brant's last reports to your Lordship.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. MOORE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 157.

Vice-Consul Rogers to Consul-General Moore.

Sir,

Caiffa, August 29, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to report that I have received from Mr. Consular Agent Finzi a report upon the present state of fear which reigns at Acre, in which he forwarded to me a copy of a document which was found affixed to the door of the Greek Church. The said document, of which I have the honour to inclose copy, emanates from the Mahometan fanatics, and is framed in most insulting language against the Christians.

I have, &c.
(Signed) E. T. ROGERS.

Inclosure 2 in No. 157.

Placard.

(Translation.)

(Picture of a sword and a red dab, to represent Christian blood.)

"The Mussulmans are a sword against the Cross."

(Picture of a man defiling the Cross.)

"FROM the Mahometan race to that of infidelity, heathenism (or plurality of gods), error and perversion, those who went astray and have been inflated on earth in disregard of truth. Ye have behaved with haughtiness, and sown corruption on earth after its reformation. Ye met with aid from the Government, and did deeds which are unprecedented. By God, and again by God, you are only like dogs. To murder you is easy. Now that the blow of death and torture has fallen on you, and that you have met with ignominy after exaltation, you have become like the leprous dogs. The curse of God be on you and those like you, and upon your Cross, for your faith is vain: and the faith of Mahomet, whom may God exalt and glorify, is truth. Ye shall see the faith as it is in truth. You have strengthened your back by the French, and became again vain. By God, the French cannot resist our warfare, for our swords are sharp, and our spears piercing; our horses swift, and our warriors lions; our gunpowder roasts the ribs, our spears shed tears; our attacks depriving of rest. Ye shall see our deeds and attacks during this year, and you will share the fate of Damascus, because we fear nobody, and make account of none. It is become lawful to dispose of your blood, treasure and honour, for ye have exceeded bounds; and those who exceed bounds must have this fate. All that has occurred is your own fault, for God Almighty said in his precious book,—'By the works of your own hands, and God does not oppress his servants (again twice swearing by God), there will remain nothing for you in the world but your name. Ye shall say there was so and so.' You will have from us only the sword, for we have overlooked (your deeds) once, twice, and the third time, but you have become bolder; this boldness conduces to your destruction, and because your blood is boiling. You pretend that Jesus, peace on him, is your prophet; forbid it, Heaven! that he should be satisfied with you. Ye are the people of fire, and shall meet with its agonizing tortures for what ye have done. May God, after this, give you no success! The book says,—'Those who trespass against you, trespass ye against them in return.'"

Inclosure 3 in No. 157.

Report.

Beyrout, August 23, 1860.

AT a Meeting of the Anglo-American Relief Committee, the following Statement and Report were adopted, and ordered to be printed for circulation in England and America.

NIVEN MOORE, *H. B. M. Consul-General, President.*

The Anglo-American Relief Committee deem it due to the British Syrian Relief Fund Committee, and to other Committees and individuals who either have contributed or propose to contribute aid to the Syrian sufferers from the present war, to keep them correctly informed as to its operations, and also as to the urgency of the distress that calls for relief. It is to secure these important objects that the following statements are made.

Our Committee originated in a stern and terrible necessity. Many thousands of plundered helpless refugees fled suddenly into our city from the mountains, seeking protection from the devouring sword, and calling for food and shelter. The emergency was so pressing, unexpected, and overwhelming, that our first circular was sent off even before the organization of the Committee could be completed, and before the full extent of the calamity was known. A second issue of the circular, however, was put forth as soon after the first as possible, showing not only the full organization of the Committee, but also the

immense addition to the amount of distress and suffering in consequence of the massacre at Damascus. The subjoined report of our Sub-Committee will show that the work of distributing food, clothing, and medicine to the sufferers is now carried forward on a scale, small at the beginning, but which has rapidly expanded into dimensions quite beyond our ability, and revealing, in its daily progress, a mass of destitution and misery which is truly appalling.

The basis of our organization is wholly unsectarian, and broad enough in its spirit and design to embrace all classes of sufferers from this war. Christians only are mentioned in our circular, and that simply because they are the only applicants for aid. Not a Druse, Mohammedan, or Jew has applied for assistance. The Druses remain masters of their half of the mountains, and from the enormous plunder of the Christians are richer than before the outbreak. The same is true of the Moslems who have taken part in the war, while the Jews have nowhere been either plundered or molested, except the very small community of Deir-el-Kamar. Of the 7,000 who now receive daily aid from your charity, a very large majority are Maronites; the next most numerous class are Greek Catholics, a considerable number are of the Greek Church, while only about 100 are Protestants. Should the changing fortunes of war reduce Druses, Moslems, Jews, or any other class of our population to the same destitution, we should be ready to extend to them the same kind of aid that we now give to the Christians.

We would earnestly guard our patrons against the impression that the necessity for these charitable contributions will soon cease by the restoration of peace, and the re-establishment of Government in this country. On the contrary, the number of the destitute is daily multiplying on our hands, and the suffering is becoming more and more stringent. Those who had a few piasters on their persons when they fled from their burning habitations have spent them; the 20,000 who escaped into the small district of Kesrawan have exhausted the resources of their brethren there, and are now drifting back upon us by thousands, seeking shelter and crying for bread, while long caravans from Damascus block up our streets with the despairing remnants of her Christian population. Many are sick; the children are dying off with alarming rapidity in our hot climate; epidemics are spreading amongst the half-fed, half-clothed, half-sheltered multitudes; and unless better food, clothing, and medical care are provided, the victims of disease will ere long outnumber those of the sword. To alleviate this accumulating misery we distribute bread daily to more than 7,000 poor; we have procured houses and tents as far as possible for shelter; we have voted to purchase and distribute with the co-operation of a Ladies' Auxiliary Committee, 3,000 garments; we have commenced a hospital for the sick; and opened a soup-kitchen chiefly, though not exclusively, for their benefit, and for mothers who nurse, hoping to save some of the children by giving to the mothers more nourishing food than mere dry bread.

It must be obvious that these various operations, expanded by urgent necessity to meet the wants of thousands, must require a large and steady income. Nor is there any reason to hope that the calls for relief will materially diminish before October, and indeed we fear that the most pinching and ruinous poverty will be felt during the latter part of autumn, and through the rainy months of winter. Let not, therefore, the benevolent in England and America relax their efforts to save from starvation these remnants of Christian populations, rescued from the sword of Druse ferocity and Mohammedan fanaticism. We will not faint under the perplexing and laborious work of distribution, but we cannot give more than is received, and when your donations fail, our distribution must cease.

We gladly embrace this opportunity to notice the labours of others in this same work of charity. Many ladies and gentlemen have distributed food and clothing from their houses, and not a few native Christians, and even some Moslems have received refugees, and to the extent of their means fed, sheltered, and clothed them. The Turkish Government has done the same to thousands, chiefly from Rasheiya, Hasbeiya, Deir-el-Kamar, and Damascus. From Greece and other parts of Europe liberal aid has been sent. Bread has been regularly and largely distributed by the French Consul-General, and by the Lazarist clergy, and the Sisters of Charity have from the first displayed that activity, energy, and devotion to the claims of the suffering, for which they are so justly distinguished. But it must be remembered that, of these sources of supply

some have already failed, others are fluctuating and uncertain, and all together, working up to their utmost capacity, still leave an immense surplus of destitution, and distress, over which we can only drop the tear of sincere but unavailing sympathy.

Summary view of the operations of the Sub-Committee.

Number of persons assisted daily from	15th to 21st July	393
"	21st to 25th July	653
"	25th July to 1st August	810
"	1st to 6th August	1,453
"	6th to 8th August	3,321
"	8th to 14th August	5,042
"	14th to 17th August	6,105
"	17th to 22nd August	7,105

Total cost up to this date for food, clothing, bedding, shelter, and medicine P. 60,532

Grants have also been made to the Sisters of Charity to aid them in their distribution amounting to P. 4,700

About £543 10s. or P. 65,232

Beyrout, August 22, 1860.

No. 158.

Sir H. Bulwer to Lord J. Russell.—(Received September 14.)
(No. 582.)

My Lord,

Therapia, September 5, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to inclose to your Lordship translated copies of a rescript addressed by the Sultan to Fuad Pasha; also his speech to the troops.

I have, &c.

(Signed) H. L. BULWER.

Inclosure 1 in No. 158

Imperial Rescript.

(Translation.)

I HAVE, by the perusal of the letters received from you, made myself acquainted with your arrival at Damascus, and with the details of the measures you have adopted. The protection of the life, property, and honor of every denomination of subjects, being one of the chief obligations of the divine law, it was the religious duty of every Mussulman to have known this article of our faith. I need not therefore say to what extent my heart and that of all Mussulmans, who are acquainted with God's commands, has been afflicted by the fact that a horde of perverse and ignorant persons among the inhabitants of Damascus have, by reason of the wickedness and sordidness of their reprobate natures, disregarded the above pure principles, and have dared, in opposition to the divine law, to shed the blood, violate the honour, and plunder the property of a number of poor creatures, their countrymen.

The amount of punishment reserved for the authors of such wickedness in the next world is not concealed from the eyes of the intelligent, but it is most necessary that they should receive in this world also the punishment awarded both by the divine and temporal law.

Therefore it appears fit to our Government that you should, in accordance with your official authorisation, immediately proceed to the infliction of condign punishment on such persons as shall, upon trial, be proved to be guilty.

The zeal which you have displayed and the service which you have rendered, being a proof of your natural ardour and personal intelligence, has obtained my fullest appreciation and approbation.

The fresh proofs of fidelity and valour displayed by all the chiefs, officers, privates, and other functionaries of my troops that are accompanying you, as conveyed in your despatches and in two military "masbatas" presented by you, answer completely to what I expected of them, and are in harmony with the glorious military qualities and character I have always found in them. You will, therefore, proclaim to them that their acts have obtained my complete satisfaction. May God always grant success to you and to those who strive on my behalf with fidelity and integrity.

August 18, 1860.

Inclosure 2 in No. 158.

Speech of Fuad Pasha.

(Translation.)

Comrades,

SOME French and English troops are coming to this neighbourhood. The European Governments, always desirous for the tranquillity of our country, have asked to assist in putting down the troubles which have taken place here, and His Majesty's Government, in order to show the trust which they repose in their Allies, have accepted their assistance. You know that these troops are troops belonging to Governments which have once upon a time rendered great assistance to our Government. Fulfil, therefore, the duty of comrades, and as yourselves are the host, and they the guests, act up to this quality, and pay them every sort of attention. Thus, they will see in what way you serve the just views of your Sovereign, how you observe military discipline and honour, and that you do not require to be assisted or encouraged in punishing the authors of the crimes that have been perpetrated against Christians, who are equally our countrymen, nor in exacting vengeance in the name of humanity.

No. 159.

Sir H. Bulwer to Lord J. Russell.—(Received September 14.)

(Private and Confidential.)

My dear Lord,

Therapia, September 5, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to inclose copy of a letter from Mr. Consul Wilkinson, as to a conversation he had had with a gentleman, supposed to be in the confidence of the Emperor, on Syrian affairs; also a communication of a confidential character, as to an alleged letter from M. de Thouvenel to the Superior of the French Convent in Syria.

I have, &c.

(Signed) H. L. BULWER.

Inclosure in No. 159.

Mr. Edwards to Sir H. Bulwer.

Excellence,

Smyrna, le 25 Août, 1860.

L'AVIS suivant vient d'être publié :—"Le Supérieur des Lazaristes à Paris a fait savoir aux Missionnaires qui dirigent les Collèges de Bébek à Constantinople, de la Propagande à Smyrne, et d'autour dans le Liban, que la réouverture des classes serait indéfiniment suspendue dans ces trois établissements."

Cette annonce a causé ici la plus vive inquiétude; on en infère que la question d'Orient est réellement et sérieusement engagée.

Je puis vous donner pour certain que la mesure a été prise à la suite d'une conversation entre M. Thouvenel et le Supérieur des Lazaristes. M. Thouvenel dit au Supérieur :—

"Dans les circonstances actuelles il est prudent de retirer les Professeurs

et de fermer les Ecoles. Nos troupes pourront éprouver un échec; ce sera pour nous un prétexte pour y envoyer 50,000 hommes. De grands événements naîtraient."

Vous pouvez ajouter une foi entière à cette information.

Un ami de Paris qui m'avait annoncé trois mois d'avance, d'une manière positive, la dernière guerre d'Italie, m'écrivait aujourd'hui que "l'intention de l'Empereur est d'en finir avec la Turquie ou de la mettre en tutelle."

Excellence, poussez les Turcs l'épée dans les reins pour qu'ils agissent avec énergie et prudence.

J'ai, &c.
(Signé) A. EDWARDS.

No. 160.

Mr. Morris to Lord J. Russell.—(Received September 15.)

My Lord,

"The Times," September 15, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to transmit a memorial from the Druse Sheikhs in Syria, which was entrusted by them to the Special Correspondent of "The Times" at Beyrout, for the information of Her Majesty's Government.

One copy of this document has been sent to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, and another to the Emperor of the French, but I do not know through what channels they were forwarded.

I have, &c.
(Signed) MOWBRAY MORRIS.

Inclosure 1 in No. 160.

Petition.

(Translation.)

A PETITION to the pavement of the threshold of Her Majesty the Illustrious Queen of England, whose grandeur may God, whose name be glorified, cause to endure, and the glory of whose power may he strengthen! O God! Amen.

The representation of the whole of the gentry and commonalty of the Druse nation of Mount Lebanon unto the Royal threshold of Her said Majesty is, that since, by the grace of God, his servants (mankind) have been favoured by the gracious manifestation of the majesty of your sovereignty and dominion, in clemency and compassion unto the servants of God, wherever they may live, and whoever they may be, among the sons of men; and more especially to him of whom it may be found that something has happened to him without investigation and proof; therefore, at the present time, do these (your) servants rush and prostrate themselves at the threshold of your Sovereignty, imploring that they may be the recipients of the compassion of Your Majesty, and earnestly desiring that we may be looked upon with the eye of pity and the execution of justice.

We are emboldened to present this petition to the threshold of the gate of England's Royalty, the just, the compassionate towards the weak among God's servants; and, inclosed therein, we have dared to place a report, containing the relation of the events which have taken place between us and the Maronite nation of Mount Lebanon, in order that, from the beginning to the end, they may enter the Royal ear, coveting, as we do, that we may be made the recipients of the Sovereign compassion, by being treated with equity, and according to evidence which is notorious, and of which the causes and origin were patent; not according to an idea of expediency contrary (thereto),* against which we have no power, and over which we have no control.

We bow down, and we cast ourselves on the pavement of the threshold of your Illustrious Sovereign Majesty, praying that you will take pity on us, by causing justice and equity to be done by concerting measures with our

* Obscure.

own exalted Ottoman Sovereign and the Great Powers, so that we may not be punished for complaints made by our adversaries against us, devoid of truth, or that execution be done upon us before investigation. The compassion of Sovereign Majesty forbids that execution be done contrary to justice. This is what we rush to represent to the pavement of the threshold of Your Majesty, whom may the Lord of mankind protect from evil! O God! Amen.

I the humble servant, by reason that the inhabitants, the presenters of this petition, do not, according to their custom, use signets, have hereunto affixed my seal and signature, and I certify to the truth of their representation.

(Signed) The Servant, HAMDAN BELMINI.
August 17, 1860 (o.s.).

Inclosure 2 in No. 160.

Druse Account of the late Events in Lebanon.

(Translation.)

IT is well known to the whole world, and the ears of people in all lands have been filled with the report that, ever since the year 57 [(A.H.) (A.D. 1841)], the Maronites have pertinaciously contemplated the uprooting of the Druse community from the Druse Mountain (Mounts Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon), and the establishment of their own independence therein; being puffed up with the idea of their great numbers and wealth, and being also led to pride by the representations of certain interested persons.

They commenced hostilities in the year above-mentioned, and in the year 61 [A.D. 1845], in hopes of bringing about this result. But God frustrated their rebellious designs, and punished them as their conduct had merited, so that it was thought they would not in future attempt such acts, or be puffed up with similar hopes.

But when the Bishop Bolus Miss'ad became patriarch over the above-mentioned nation, the idea was again entertained by him, and the hope tempted him to pride. With the advice and approval of Bishop Tubia 'Avn, and of others like him, he took and concerted measures necessary for the execution of the same.

They perceived that the most efficient means for the realization of their designs was unanimity, from which unity of purpose proceeds, and, since they saw it was possible for some of the Chiefs of their people to rely on their own numbers, and refuse to act in concert with them, especially as the greater number of these Chiefs were men of wealth, and surrounded by comforts, besides being known for their sentiments of kindness to women and children, to say nothing of their patriotism, they (the Bishops) set themselves to work to undermine the consideration enjoyed by these Chiefs, and to abrogate their rights, setting up in their stead persons who entertained similar views with themselves, and who would be mere tools in their own hands. In proof of this may be cited what occurred at Beytu-'l-Khāzin, at Beyt-Jeyshed, and at other fiefs of the Christians, where they were expelled, their property was seized, and Tanoss Shāhin, with others, were set up in their stead; also the spread of this same evil to the districts of Kati', Meten, &c.

Another requisite for their plans was the confidence (?) of their people, for herewith power is fortified. The proof that they set to work to secure this confidence consists in their having written and distributed pledge documents among the inhabitants of all the villages, binding them to act in concert, and in blind confidence. The purport of these documents became known, and several were got possession of, when they were found to contain that which is above set forth, and the wording of the whole was identical.

A third requisite was an alliance with the other Christian people, since thereby they would not only be directly strengthened, but would also be guaranteed from their opposition, for, in the two former risings, a considerable number had refused to participate in their proceedings, by reason that it was obvious that, after achieving the object of their desires, the Maronites would

turn upon them and treat them as they had done others, unless they embraced Maronitism. The proof of this idea is the strenuous effort made to display affection, and to parade an unusual show of conciliation; also the issue of proclamations and manifestoes by the patriarch and bishops to the whole sect, to the effect that they should behave towards the people of other Christian denominations as if they were the children of one sole race, and to the Khawārīna [priests?] to the effect that they might frequent their (Maronite) churches, be present at their masses and burials, contrary to what had been the custom. We saw all this in more places than one, and it was established beyond doubt by a multitude of people.

A fourth requisite was the existence of delegates, in the nature of a public assembly, in each of their principal parishes, who might be the organs for addressing and advising, and from whom might emanate orders and dispositions, for, thereby, ideas might be strengthened. The proof of this is the organisation of delegates in Beyrout, Zahleh, Deir-el-Kamar, Kesrawān, and other places, as is well known. The principal of these assemblies was the assembly at Beyrout.

A fifth requisite was the creation of "Chiefs of the young men," whom these latter might obey; for, by this means, it became easier for them to carry their plans into execution. The proof of this is what took place, and was publicly known in respect to the appointment of "Chiefs of the young men" in every village and plantation, even in the towns, and, what is more still, in the very centre of Government, in Beyrut itself.

The sixth, was the general armament of the people of the sect, so that their strength might be augmented. The proof of their efforts to gain this point consists in what was seen as to the distribution of great quantities of arms from Beyrout to every place. This distribution was effected principally by means of the Khawārīna [priests?] people. When inquiry was made as to the necessity for this measure, and as to payment for the arms, since it occurred in a season of distress, when most of them were in want of necessary food, let alone the means of paying for these arms in large quantities, the answer was given that they were for their own protection, and, according to the tenor of the bills of exchange, the time of payment was fixed for a future date. It afterwards became evident that these bills of exchange were a mere feint, and that the arms were from the "Company" formed at Beyrout, for conducting the affairs of the rising.

For the space of about six months, also, Bishop Tubia occupied himself in the formation of a Christian Committee at Antalias; and, according to what transpired, his chief design, in the formation of this Committee, was the enrolment of young men in every place, and to learn who among them was unarmed, so that arms might be furnished to them. When he found that he could not carry out this design, he took other steps to arrive at the desired knowledge by means of the Khawārīna [priests?] people.

Another measure was the instruction of the young men in military exercises. The proof that they exerted themselves to accomplish this object consists in what was seen as to their furnishing drill-masters to the greater number of their villages, to teach the sword exercise, equitation (?) and ball practice, &c.

Another, again, was the getting rid from among themselves of all strangers to their sect, as far as was possible, so as to be safe from a divulgence of their secrets, not to mention their own security of mind. The proof of this is that Mussulmans and people of the Mute'evvīla sect (Metuali) are found inhabiting Kesrawān, Tutūh, and their districts; these were urged to take their departure from among them, or to adopt the Maronite creed, since they were few in number. In fact, a considerable number were constrained to embrace the Maronite faith, and those who adhered to their old professions were left in bad circumstances. The exertions of the Bishop Tubia reached that point that he threatened the wife of the Emir Sulayman-el-Metin, and also her two sons, who were Mussulmans, until they entered the Maronite community. He also excited the Emir Mejīd, one of the grandsons of the Emir Beshir Shāhābī, and promised him that, if he would begin the rising, he would procure his nomination as Kaimakam of the whole Mountain. This was with the view to induce him to become a Christian again, and to make him pleased with the idea of re-entering the Maronite community; for the said Emir had professed

Islamism at Constantinople. In fine, they left nothing undone that might facilitate the execution of their designs, and to such a point that, if they were all to be mentioned, the tale would never end.

As soon as it was perceived that the arrangements were completed as they desired, and that the preparations for their designs were all carried out in the best manner, as above detailed, the Committee of Beyrout began to write to the districts and to require the attendance of delegates from each place. The confident bearing of the Christians, also, and their warlike aspirations, became more and more conspicuous; as did also their pressing invitations to join them, and their promises of immense advantages, such as the distribution of ammunition, the furnishing provisions (or pay), and everything needful for war; so that, in a short space of time, they rose in open revolt and made public manifestations of being in a state of warfare.

They began, in the first place, to take possession of the highways, to rob and ill-treat travellers, and to oppress those newly (established?). All this while the Druses took no heed of what was happening, and their Chieftains were using every effort and endeavour to preserve and perpetuate tranquillity, making continued representations to the principal Christians and those known for their wisdom, and exhorting them to remain quiet and peaceable, and to refrain from such acts, warning them at the same time of the evil consequences. The only effect, however, was that these latter became more and more excited and unsettled, until at length, on Friday night, the 15th of Ramazan [6th April, 1860?] while a Druse muleteer, of the village of Ba'Kalin, one of the dependencies of the (fief or) manor of Shuf, was passing the night in the caravanserai named Khānu-'l-Kas'a, and situated in the vicinity of the village of El-Hids, a dependency of the Deputy-Governorship [Kaimakamate] of the Christians, a posse of Maronites came upon him from the village and fired upon him as he slept; they then cut him to pieces with their swords, and left him strewn about. Nothing was done in this matter, further than representing the facts to the authorities in the usual manner.

A certain interval elapsed after this, the public excitement increasing from one day to another. Then was seen the commencement of the formation of military corps in the district of Kesrawān, in the neighbourhood of Beyrut, and elsewhere.

Again, on the 23rd of the month of Shewwāl [14th May, 1860], three Druses, muleteers, of the village of Ma'āsir, were returning from the town of Sidon; and on their arriving in the vicinity of the bridge of that place, they were set upon by a rabble of armed men from among the Maronites of Kaytūla, a village in the district of Jazīn, and various other places, who fired at them, killing two of the number, and leaving the other at the point of death. When news of this event reached the relatives of the slain, great excitement was caused, but instant measures were adopted to calm it. Two days later, however, as several Christians of the district of Jazīn were passing beneath the village of Kahtūniyya, situated within the fief of Shuf, they chanced to meet with some Druses, and fire was opened on both sides, three of the Christians losing their lives on the occasion.

Intelligence of this having reached Jazīn, the inhabitants became greatly moved, and a party set out declaring war against the district of Shuf. Upon which steps were taken to lay the matter before the Authorities. Orders were immediately given for the especial despatch of an officer and fifty horsemen, who were also accompanied by Commissioners on the part of the Kā'im-makām (Deputy-Governor), from among the members of the Council and others, with a sufficient number of horsemen, so that, with the cognizance of the lord of the manor (Mukāta'aji) of those places, Sa'id Bey Jānbulāt, the necessary measures might be carried into execution under the circumstances.

When this party reached the village of Muktāra, the residence of the above-mentioned lord of the manor, it was judged best to send two messengers to treat (?) with Kahlūniyya and Kaytūla, as was the usual custom. The inhabitants of Kahlūniyya accepted the terms proposed (?), but the men of Kaytūla flew to arms and drove away the messengers in a most insolent manner, acting under the advice of Abu Semra, "Chief of the Young Men," of the district.

The excitement in this part of the country then rose to an extreme pitch,

and every symbol declaratory of war was displayed. All kinds of endeavours were made to counsel moderation to them, and to set them right; but their arrogance was only increased thereby.

The delegate of the Christians of Hazūb (or Kharūb), too, named Dāhir Nasif, rose up in arms declaring war, and a body of the Christians of that district collected about him in the village of Burjeyn, where he resided. On Monday, the first of the month of Zi-l-ki'da [21st May, 1860], he met with a Mussulman of his village, assailed him with his arms, and wounded him. And on the same day a large party of horsemen sallied forth from the village of Zahleh proceeding to the plain of Bekāa, where they commenced molesting the cattle and the men of the Druses that they found in those quarters. This party established themselves in the village of Kabr-Elyās, situated at the foot of the Mountain. On the same day another party, inhabitants of Kesrawān, made incursion as far as the Dog River (Nehru-l-Kelb), and there commenced the formation of a corps under the command of Tanoss Shāhīn.

On Saturday, the sixth of the month of Zi-l-ki'da [26th May], some individual Druses of the village of Beshāmūn were going to find some of their relatives who were among the irrigators working on the river of Beyrout. When they had arrived in the neighbourhood of the kitchen-garden of the oil presser, situated on the bank of the river, they were met by the Christians assembled there, who demanded their arms. They refused to give them up; but those latter continued to press them until they entered a house there. This was surrounded, and the menace was held out that unless they gave up their arms, the house should be burnt down over them. Several of them then gave in, but others threw themselves into the outer premises out of the windows (?). Cavasses (?) were sent after these, who came up with them in the direction of the city. At this juncture they were met by Eyyub of Tripoli, one of the committee of delegates at Beyrout, and author of this plot. With him was an armed band, who immediately commenced firing on them, killing one and wounding a second badly, so that he died in consequence.

The day following, a Maronite of Deir-el-Kamar was proceeding on the road of the above-mentioned place, and had reached the shop of 'Aynāb, when he was met by some relatives of those killed in the way above recited. They fired at him and killed him; and when the intelligence reached Deir-el-Kamar, it produced great excitement among the inhabitants, and they commenced a perquisition among the Druses there present and found a Druse man from Kafr-Fakūd, whom they shot, and he died.

On the next day, Sunday [27th May], by reason of what had happened at the Deir (convent), great excitement occurred in the manor of Shahr, and the whole Maronite population thereof assembled in the village of Mu'allaka, and displayed the emblems of war.

On the morrow, Monday [28th May], a full Court of Employés, the Members of the Provincial Council, and the Notables of the city, was held at Beyrout, in the presence of his Excellency the Governor of the province, and the Bishop Tubia was sent for. A debate was held as to what should be done to abate the existing disturbances, and to disperse the gatherings of the Christians, which had extended up to the boundaries of Beyrout, and to cause them to depart to their homes. The resolution was taken, to put in motion, with all dispatch, the troops of the Imperial forces, who were, accordingly, moved out that very day to the lands of Hāzimiyya; also, that confidential persons on the part of his said Excellency, and the Dean or Archdeacon [Vakil] of the said Bishop, should be sent to Tanoss Shāhīn, to exhort him to withdraw from what he had undertaken, and to disperse the band collected about him; and although the Bishop made an appeal to notify his disapproval of this arrangement, and declared he could do nothing in the matter, it was still thought the best that could be done; so he became satisfied, and sent his Dean with the confidential persons, who went together to Tanoss. But nothing came of this, excepting that in the evening of that same day a large body of men from that army entered the village of Ba'badā, in the confines of the village of Shuwayfāt, the place of residence of the Druse Kaimakam, whence, to the manor of Kesrawān, is a distance of about five hours' journey. All the Christians of the district assembled there also.

The Kaimakam (Deputy-Governor) immediately sent in a report to the authorities and to the Consuls his well-wishers (?). His Excellency the

Governors gave orders that confidential persons should be sent to advise the chiefs present in the said village, and to turn away that army from prosecuting its designs. They had peremptory instructions to disband it. The answer was that, of a certainty they would complete that which they had undertaken in point of smiting the Druses; and that if the regular troops should interfere, they would fight them also. Not satisfied with this, the Kaimakam again sent confidential persons to the said chiefs to ask for the dispersion of the assemblage, and the dismissal of every one to his home, and the withdrawal from this enterprise, the cause of universal trouble. As a last argument, the reply was that they had opened the banners of war, and there was no way left to close them again.

On the same day, a large body of the Maronites of Jerūr Kesrawan and Kātī advanced upon the lands of the meadows which are in the advanced parts of the manor of Metu. And on the next day, Tuesday [29th May] the Khūri (priest?) of Busheriyya, one of the arable districts of Beyrout, went out with a large assembly, having in his hand a flag of war, and advanced with them in the intent of attacking the Druses of Beyt-Meri, situated in the direction of the Meten. When they were nigh upon entering the village, Ibrahim Agha (an officer of the hired troops, stationed there by the provincial authorities to prevent the causes, among the inhabitants, on the part of daring people, of what had happened in former years), and the elders (or an old woman) of the Druses of the village, went to the Emir Yusuf-Ali-Ebu-l-Lam', the lord of the manor, and begged him to send back this Khūri and his band, and to prevent warfare. The Emir did his best to attain those results; but, seeing that he had no power over them, he told the Druses to evacuate the village. They forsook their homes immediately, so as to avoid all cause (for trouble), and betook themselves in the direction of the village of the Druses. When they arrived outside the village, they saw this band enter it and commence burning the houses thereof. They suddenly set out in pursuit of them, intending to destroy them also. Then they were forced to defend their lives, and those dependent on them, so that a combat took place between the two parties, and, in spite of the small number of the villagers, and the superiority of the Christians in that respect, it did not take long before these latter were routed and put to flight, so that the Druses returned home.

On the same day, the band of Zahleh, stationed in the village of Kabr-Elyās, went out into the Mountain with the view of finding Ali Bey El-Amād, who resided there in the village of 'Ayn-Dāra, for the protection of the Damascus road, as he was commissioned to do. When they approached the entrance to that village with their bands, which amounted to about 3,000 fighting men, the said Ali Bey went out to drive them away, attended by his servants and the people of the village, who were under 200 fighting men in number. A battle took place between the two in the Debūr valley, which lies near the village. The noise of the combat reaching to the adjacent districts, successive arrivals of brave men brought him succour, and the struggle was prolonged until the band from Zahleh was routed and returned to the caravanserai Khān Morād, situated near to the village of Kabr-Elyās, where it took up its quarters. The battle was then renewed; they were surrounded by the men, and the fight pressed sore upon them. It took but a short time to rout them again, when they fled in confusion to the various districts of Zahleh. The number of Druses engaged in the whole of this affair did not, however, amount to 1,000 fighting men; and the said 'Ali Bey El-Amād was wounded in the combat, while the Sheykh Hamūd 'Abdu-l-Melik was slain therein, although he had come solely to make inquiries, and to prevent hostilities, and was unarmed, being generally known as one of the chief wishers for peace.

On the above-mentioned day, a band of Christians went forth from Deir-el-Kamar to go to the lower 'Urkūb. On nearing the village of Kafr-Nabrakh, the residence of Mulham Bey El-Amād, the Bey went forth to repel them, and a combat ensued, when they beaten, and had to turn back again.

On the next day, Wednesday [30th May], the bands of Ba'abdā went forth to attack the manor of Upper Gharb. And as soon as news of this expedition reached his Excellency the Governor of the Province, he sent his interpreter to them, with several military officers, to advise them to desist from

their design, and to caution them as to the consequences of this attack. But they would not listen to this, and proceeded to the place they had in view. And when they entered the nearest parts of the Gharb, and began to set fire to several places therein, the men of the Gharb went out against them, defeated them, and put them to flight; neither did they give up the pursuit until his Excellency the said Governor restrained them, and put a stop to the combat.

On this day, a body of Maronites collected together in the Metin from Zahleh and other places, advanced against the Druse villages situated in the vicinity of the Christian districts, which villages had already been abandoned by the inhabitants. They set fire to the villages of Karnā'il and Kafr-Selwān, with others, and then advanced against the remaining Druse quarters. Upon this, the Druse inhabitants went forth to repel them, when a battle ensued, which lasted a long while, until the Christians were driven back in confusion to their own districts.

On the same day a fight took place in the village of Hamānā, and after a fierce siege, the Christians were routed there also. Again, on the same date, at about midnight, many shots were heard in various directions in the plain of the Shuwayfāt from all the guardians placed towards the west of the village, in the direction of the band of Muallaka; and, as is usual when such things occur on the part of the guardians, it was understood as a signal of the arrival of a band to attack the place. For this reason, the inhabitants began to take measures of precaution, and to prepare to meet the approaching band. Some few went out to obtain information in the direction of the guardians, and found a multitude of men under arms, and one of the guardians killed. And when they advanced towards them, they fired at them, and moved on towards them; so that they were under the necessity to return the fire of the advancing party. After fighting for a certain while, they were defeated, and left the road leading to the village.

The next day, Thursday [31st May], the bands of Christians who were assembled in Beyt Meri, advanced to attack the Druses of the village of 'Ibādiyya, and the bands assembled in Salima, 'Ubāniyya, Ba'badāt, and Bekfiya, to attack the Druses of the village of Rās. When each of the bodies had reached the vicinity of the place it was to attack, the inhabitants came out to repel them, and fighting went on for the space of eight hours, until the Christians cleared away, and returned in disorder.

On the day following, Friday [1st June], as a number of Druses from Manāsif were reaping a field belonging to them, near to Deir-el-Kamar, a party of Christians from Deir-el-Kamar went out to attack them, and fired at them; this led to a fight.

Another party went out to attack the Druses of the two villages, Kafr-hamal and Kafr-katra, both belonging to the manor of Munāsif; a battle ensued, and the noise was heard in the neighbouring districts. People flocked in promiscuously at the sound, to give succour; and when they had become numerous, the Christians began to set fire to the houses of the Druses, in the Deir (el-Kamar). Upon this the fighting became serious, and attacks were mutually made on both sides; but the Christians were beaten, and took refuge in the village, pursued by the Druses until they had occupied it; and they penetrated it in various places until nightfall, when certain of the leading men came forward and drew them away from fighting; upon which each of them went away home.

The same day a party of Christians started from Jizin to attack the Druses of the village of Nihā. The inhabitants went out to meet them, a fight ensued, and fresh combatants kept coming up to the assistance of both parties. The combat waxed fiercer and fiercer, until the result declared in the rout of the Christians in the whole of those districts.

On the same day again, Yusuf, the bleacher, delegate of the Christians of the district of Tuffah, went out with a band he had collected in the village of Derbu-'s-Sin, to attack Kāsim El-Yusuf, who was on the river of the bridge of Sidon, keeping guard over the possessions of Sa'id Bey Jānbulāt, situate in that direction. When he neared the spot, they met and fought, when the bleacher and his party were discomfited.

On Monday, the 17th of the same month [4th June, 15th Zi'l-Ka'da], the bands of Zahleh, stationed at Humma-Kafr-Selwān, attacked the Druses

of the village of Fātūghā; and, as it chanced that his Excellency the Great Governor of the Province had set out on the road to Damascus to prevent a gathering which he had heard there was a particular intention of forming, his Excellency prohibited any succour being sent to the Druses, and sent the most peremptory orders to their Chiefs in the vicinity to prevent any relief from being sent to them; but, as the village of Fātūghā is near the village of Karnā'il, a party of Druses resident there had already set out to assist before the orders arrived, so the fight waxed hot, and the Christians retired defeated. His Excellency immediately sent some men of note among the Druses to turn them back and to put out the flames of this misadventure.

After that the Druses had arrived in the neighbourhood of Zahleh, and on Tuesday, the 24th of the month [12th June], took place the arrival of the levies of the Hawrān and of the valley of Tim and their environs, in the Bekāā; for, so soon as the news was received in those quarters that the Maronites of the Druse Mountain, with their co-operators belonging to other sects, had risen openly to carry out what they designed in respect of extirpating all traces of the Druse nation from the Druse Mountain, and of establishing their own supremacy there, and that they had begun to form bands and to attack the Druses, their zeal for their kinsmen was kindled, and a large body of them came forward to ascertain the truth and to assist.

The next day, Wednesday [13th June], as a small party, established at Ber-Eliyas (Kabr-Elyas?), about an hour and a-half's journey from Zahleh, were attacked by the horsemen of Zahla, a combat ensued between them, and the flames of war raged until the horsemen of Zahleh were worsted and retired into the village.

Then, as had been the case from the beginning, the utmost endeavours were used to prevent the least thing from happening, and to take away all cause of (trouble), and to bring about the return of tranquillity; and, since the presence of those levies in the places mentioned was a cause of disquiet, instant efforts were made by the Kaimakam to restrain the said army, and cause them to return home quietly. He sent for Sheikh Mahmūd El-'Id, one of the chief priests [or elders] of the Mountain, whose love of peace and security was well known, and commissioned him to go and advise them, and set them right, employing all possible means to effect that purpose. He went to them, and after much discussion he received from their Sheikhs and Chieftains the promise to undertake nothing for the space of three days, founded upon the consideration that every pains was being taken to effect a reconciliation between the two nations; that delay expired without the accomplishment of this purpose, and then a fresh term of four days was arranged with them.

But, on Monday, the 29th of the month, on which this second delay was arranged, as some Druse horsemen were picketed (?) in the lands of Sa'd-Nā'il, at about an hour's distance from Zahleh, a body of Zahleh horseman fell upon them, and a battle was begun. The remaining bodies of Druses present thereabouts gathered by degrees to the noise of the combat; fresh parties issued from Zahleh, and the flames of war raged outside of the village between them. Before very long, the bands of Zahleh retreated to the village, and intrenched themselves there. The parties of Druses surrounded it, attacked it, and entered it by storm, sword in hand. Those who were therein fled in disorder to the Mountain.

On Wednesday [20th June] the first of Zi'l-hijja, news spread over most districts of the Mountain that fighting had occurred at Deir-el-Kamar, and that it was undergoing a siege. Then men began to flock there from places in the vicinity. When the more advanced parties of these gatherings arrived there, and shots began to be fired from the houses, a certain number of these Druses were struck. Then it was they attacked the place, and took possession of the whole town, killing a large number of those Christians whom they found therein.

When his Excellency the Governor of the Province heard of this, he instantly mounted his horse, and taking with him a part of the regular and of the hired troops, set out in haste for the village. On arriving there, he ordered the fighting to be stopped, and the evacuation of the place by the Druses, who were there. He then received information that affairs were in a critical state in the city and its environs; upon which he returned thitherwards, and, after

giving the necessary directions and orders, he again went out to the camp of the regular troops.

His Excellency had already given orders for the two Kaimakams of the Mountain to come in to Beyrout, with as many as were necessary of the lords of manors, members of local Councils, and persons of distinction among the inhabitants, in order to deliberate upon what might be necessary to be done in the actual condition of affairs, so as to change this into a state of peace and calm.

In pursuance of that mandate, the two Kaimakams, and the others, came in, and after lengthened discussions between the two parties upon the several questions above-mentioned, the mutual consent and agreement of both parties was given, and peace was made as occurred between the two races after the war of '61; which is that each agrees to give and forget the past (to let bygones be bygones), to bring no actions, and raise no claims either now or in future, from the time when these troubles broke out into general warfare until the present time; and, hereupon binding contracts were written.

No. 161.

Lord J. Russell to Earl Cowley.

(No. 907.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, September 15, 1860.

THE substance of the reports of Mr. Consul Moore, Mr. Consul Brant, and Mr. Cyril Graham,* is sent to you herewith, that you may communicate it to M. Thouvenel.

You will perceive that none of these gentlemen have much confidence in the measures taken, and fear that as soon as European opinion is satisfied the old injustice will prevail.

It is for the French Government to consider and compare their accounts with ours.

It will be for them to decide very soon whether the French troops can return after two months' sojourn, or whether they shall stay the whole six months of the Convention.

In the latter case it may be desirable that the second division of 6,000 should go to Syria. Your Excellency is already instructed to say that for this second division Great Britain and Prussia are ready to furnish 3,000 each. But it is necessary to decide soon on account of the insecurity of the Syrian coast.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

P.S. You will speak to M. Thouvenel as soon as possible on this subject.
J. R.

No. 162.

Mr. Hammond to Mr. Morris.

Sir,

Foreign Office, September 15, 1860.

I AM directed by Lord John Russell to acknowledge with thanks your letter of this day's date, inclosing memorials from the Druse Sheiks in Syria.

I have, &c.
(Signed) E. HAMMOND.

* See Nos. 129, 135, 136, 137, and 138.

No. 163.

Lord J. Russell to Sir H. Bulwer.

(No. 503.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, September 15, 1860.

I TRANSMIT to your Excellency a copy of a paper furnished to me by M. Musurus,* purporting to contain the substance of Fuad Pasha's reports, as transmitted to M. Musurus by Safvet Effendi on the 23rd ultimo.

I directed Mr. Hammond, in my absence from London, to see M. Musurus, and to state to him that although I was very much pleased at the accounts of all that Fuad Pasha had done up to the 23rd of August, I regretted to observe what he had not done.

The Pasha of Beyrout, the Pasha of Damascus, and the Turkish Officer who connived at the massacre of Deir-el-Kamar, have hitherto been unpunished. A court-martial would easily ascertain the facts. Indeed we are told that the trial of Achmet Pasha is concluded, although the sentence has not been pronounced.

I desired Mr. Hammond to say that if those men are not severely punished, the public opinion of Europe, although it may acquit the Grand Vizier, Aali Pasha, Ruschdi Pasha, and Fuad Pasha, will infallibly conclude that persons high in office at Constantinople have instigated those murders before the fact, and have protected the murderers after the fact. What will then be the condition of Damascus? The relations of those who have been executed will remain full of sentiments of revenge, and with increased hatred of Christians. They will naturally say that if they indulge their revenge to the utmost, although some may be punished, they are sure to find protectors at the Sultan's Court; so that the position of the Christians in Syria will be worse than ever.

M. Musurus promised to report faithfully to his Government what Mr. Hammond had thus said to him.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 164.

Mr. Fane to Lord J. Russell.—(Received September 17.)

(No. 92.)

My Lord,

Vienna, September 13, 1860.

THE Russian Minister at this Court has been very urgent in pressing Count Rechberg to pronounce an opinion on the objections which the Porte is said to raise to the instructions furnished to the European Commissioners for Syria. The desires of the Turkish Government, as far as Count Rechberg is acquainted with them are, that the Commissioners should be declared to have no judicial functions; that they should not be authorized to re-investigate cases on which Fuad Pasha has already pronounced judgment; and that the scene of their labours should be limited to Mount Lebanon.

Count Rechberg tells me that he has informed M. de Balabine that the intelligence which has reached him of the views of the Porte on this subject, is only of a fragmentary character, and that he must wait for the receipt of detailed information before he can form an opinion of them.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JULIAN FANE.

No. 165.

Mr. Fane to Lord J. Russell.—(Received September 17.)

(No. 100.)

My Lord,

Vienna, September 13, 1860.

WITH reference to your Lordship's despatch No. 17 of the 5th instant, Count Rechberg, after taking the orders of the Emperor, has informed me that

* Inclosure in No. 146.

he highly approves the project that, in case the second division of 6,000 men be required in Syria, according to the Convention concluded at Paris, Great Britain and Prussia should each furnish 3,000 men; and his Excellency added, that it would in his opinion be very desirable that Her Majesty's Government should make a proposal to that effect.

Count Rechberg has repeatedly manifested his dissatisfaction that the military expedition to Syria should be composed only of French troops, and appears to regard with unfeigned pleasure the prospect of British and Prussian troops taking part in it.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JULIAN FANE.

No. 166.

M. Musurus to Mr. Hammond.—(Received September 17.)

Mon Cher M. Hammond, *St. Leonards, le 17 Septembre, 1860.*
JE m'empresse de vous transmettre, ci-jointe, la copie d'une dépêche télégraphique que je viens de recevoir de la Sublime Porte par l'entremise de l'Ambassade de Turquie à Vienne.

Votre, &c.
(Signé) C. MUSURUS.

Inclosure in No. 166.

The Turkish Ambassador at Vienna to M. Musurus.

(Télégraphique.) *Vienne, le 16 Septembre, 1860.*
PAR un télégramme du 15 Septembre de la Sublime Porte, je suis chargé de vous communiquer ce qui suit :—

"Beyrouth, le 9 Septembre, 1860.
"Un exprès est arrivé à l'instant. Le Muchir Ahmed Aga, les Colonels qui commandaient à Hasbeya et à Deir-el-Kamar, Osman Bey et Abdul Sélim Bey, ainsi que d'autres officiers de grade inférieur, ont été fusillés à Damas.
"Son Excellence Fuad Pacha est à Cabélias, à douze heures de distance d'ici. Demain il entrera à Beyrouth; une brillante réception est préparée au Représentant du Sultan.

(Signé) "ABRO."

No. 167.

Lord J. Russell to Consul Brant.

(No. 7.)
Sir,

Foreign Office, September 19, 1860.
I HAVE to acquaint you that I approve of the letter which you addressed, on the 24th of August, to the Emir Seyed Abd-el-Kader, of which a copy is inclosed in your despatch No. 14 of the 24th ultimo, conveying to his Highness the thanks of Her Majesty's Government for his exertions in saving the lives of Christians during the late massacre at Damascus.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 168.

Major Fraser to Lord J. Russell.—(Received September 19.)

(No. 6.)

My Lord,

Damascus, August 30, 1860.

NO event of marked importance has occurred since I did myself the honour to address your Lordship from this place on the 24th instant. About that period an official memorandum, of which I now inclose a translation, was addressed to the different Consulates, containing a list of the number of prisoners condemned up to that date, together with the punishment awarded.

Few arrests of criminals have been made during the last week, but for four days past his Excellency Fuad Pasha has been levying conscripts for the army from among the able-bodied citizens. During seven or eight years past, the city of Damascus has failed to furnish the annual quota required by the Porte, thus forming a debt of which his Excellency has now demanded an immediate settlement. Up to to-day the troops have collected about 1,000 men, one-half of whom are leaving for Constantinople this evening. The citizens are doing their best to evade this forced levy, and the shops, as well as other places of business, have continued closed since the 27th instant.

No more executions have taken place, nor have any been announced, and to a looker on the trials appear to proceed very slowly. Fuad Pasha complains of the difficulty of obtaining evidence, and there doubtless is difficulty. Few Moslems will voluntarily come forward as accusers; yet persons capable of forming an opinion, and well acquainted with the city, think that, amid such a mass of guilt, these difficulties are by no means insuperable.

His Excellency has been receiving visits from several Arab Chiefs of the Haurân district during the past week, and has been attempting to settle some old tribal feuds among them, with the view, apparently, of using their combined strength against the Druses, if necessary. It would be infinitely preferable, however, in every point of view, that the Government should show itself capable of dealing single-handed with its unruly subjects.

His Excellency has been providing further house accommodation for the Christian refugees yet in the Castle; but they show themselves slow to take advantage of it, owing to their fear of the Moslem population, who still curse any Christian they meet without a guard or other protection. There seems reason to believe that it will be long ere Christians can again feel at ease in Damascus.

The French authorities express much regret that their troops should have arrived unaccompanied by an English force, as they say they are thus placed in a false light, inasmuch as the Druses are thus made to view the French as their enemies, while they believe the English Government not to have blamed their conduct.

Even were this assumption correct—which, I think, is not the case—it would be practically of very little consequence, as it is Fuad Pasha's anxious desire and declared intention, so far as it rests with his Excellency, to employ no foreign force whatever in re-establishing the Sultan's authority in Syria.

The approach of the caravan of pilgrims from Mecca, commonly designated "the Hâj," has just been announced by a salute from the Castle. It is not yet known, however, whether, under present circumstances, they will be permitted to enter the city.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. J. FRASER.

Inclosure in No. 168.

Memorandum.

(Translation.)

Persons condemned to death for having murdered Christians, and who have been hanged	56
Condemned to death for having joined in the outbreak with arms in hand—and who, as belonging to the irregular troops, or armed police, have been shot	111
Condemned to imprisonment for life, as having joined in the outbreak, with arms in hand, and who have been sent to Constantinople	139
Condemned to exile as having joined in the pillage, without arms	145
Condemned to hard labour for a fixed period, and detained at Damascus to be employed on roads	186
Condemned to death in their absence ("par contumace"), and who will be executed according as they fall into the hands of justice	83
Total	720

No. 169.

Major Fraser to Lord J. Russell.—(Received September 20.)

(No. 7.)

My Lord,

Damascus, September 3, 1860.

I HAVE the honour herewith to inclose notes of a conversation I yesterday held with his Excellency Fuad Pasha, which will, I trust, explain the present position of affairs.

His Excellency seems very desirous that the French expedition should remain inactive for the present. No further executions have yet taken place; but those of the officers implicated at Hasbeya, Rasheya, and Damascus, about five persons in all, are expected daily.

A few conscripts are yet being taken, the required number of 2,000 not having been yet obtained.

The Christians seem alarmed at the prospect of Fuad Pasha quitting Damascus, but I think without good grounds, as his Excellency's absence will be short, and the garrison is ample.

No event of any importance has occurred since my last report on the 30th ultimo.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. J. FRASER.

Inclosure in No. 169.

Notes of a Conversation held with Fuad Pasha by Major Fraser, at Damascus, September 3, 1860.

HIS Excellency Fuad Pasha having expressed a desire to see Mr. Consul Brant and myself, Mr. Brant being unwell on that day I proceeded alone to wait upon the Pasha.

His Excellency said that he wished to state his intention of quitting Damascus for a short visit to Beyrout, rendered desirable in consequence of representations made by the General commanding the French expeditionary force. That General Beaufort had sent Colonel Chanzy to intimate that the French force was now ready for any duty that might be required of it; that the General was very desirous of quitting Beyrout, which was proving an unhealthy encampment for the troops, and as they were eager to be employed, and had been much excited by the stories told them by the Christian refugees in Beyrout, the General feared some unpleasant collision might occur between the soldiers and some part of the Moslem population. That the General therefore thought

a double purpose might be served if the French troops were permitted to proceed into Lebanon, taking with them the Christian refugees, and re-establishing them in their villages; but that in any case the General would be obliged to seek a spot in some good military position where he might hope to preserve the health of his men.

To which statement his Excellency had replied, that he had no objection to General Beaufort seeking another position, but had proposed that it should be in the Kesrouan, (the Maronite country), which was objected to, or, at all events, not in the country occupied by Druses, as his Excellency was particularly desirous of avoiding any collision until a plan of action had been decided, and due preparation made. His Excellency had further stated that he thought it better the Christians should not return to their villages until it were known whether military operations would be undertaken against the Druses or not, as in the former event the whole French force would be insufficient to guard the Christians, scattered, as they would be, through numerous villages, against the perils of Druse reprisals. His Excellency added, that in consequence of these representations he had decided to proceed himself to Beyrout about the 6th instant, with the view of personally examining what would be required. He also remarked that the French seemed urgent to be employed, but he saw the greatest objection to their acting at all independently of the Ottoman troops, as, should blows by any accident be once exchanged between the French and the Druses, it was impossible to say how far it might lead, as the Hauran Druses would probably join the others, while friendship and a community of feeling might cause some of the Bedouin to support the Druses, so that, opposed to greatly superior numbers, the French honour might possibly become involved, when it would be quite impossible to say where the warfare or intervention might end.

With regard to the trials of criminals, his Excellency mentioned that those of Achmet, late Pasha, and of several military officers implicated at Hasbeya, Rasheya, and Damascus, were closed, that the subordinate officers would shortly be executed, but that Achmet Pasha would in the meantime be reserved pending the trial of Khorshid Pasha of Beyrout; and the examination of the members of the Great Council of Damascus, who had now been arrested, in the hope that some light might be thrown on the nature of the relations subsisting between them. The conduct of the private soldiers at Hasbeya and elsewhere towards the widows and daughters of the slaughtered Christians, including the abduction of some, having been brought to his Excellency's notice, he said he had not before heard of these charges, that the men had been disbanded and incorporated in other corps, but were yet within reach, and that their conduct would be inquired into, as well as that of all military officers in any position of authority at places where massacres had taken place.

His Excellency repeated that he found himself in the greatest possible difficulty as regarded the notables of the city, that he had received letters from all quarters begging him to strike quickly and severely at the leaders in late events; but that, notwithstanding all his desire to succeed, he had hitherto utterly failed in obtaining evidence sufficient for conviction; though hearsay evidence and general rumour were not wanting. That his position was deeply embarrassing, as it would hardly be believed in Europe that evidence against individuals of the higher class was so difficult to obtain in this country. He would willingly have formed a species of jury had he been able to find five men who could be trusted with such a duty, but he felt that such men as he could obtain would in all probability acquit every Moslem brought before them. He was therefore debarred that resource, and had hitherto been obliged to conduct all the preliminary examinations himself, with the aid of his personal staff, in order to decide who should be sent before the Special Court constituted for the purpose.

His Excellency requesting to know whether I had any suggestion to make in this matter, I replied that it appeared to me he would economise his own valuable time, as well as be relieved from a very unpleasant responsibility, by causing functionaries accustomed to the collection and preparation of evidence to be sent from Constantinople, who could then devote themselves exclusively to this duty. That I had also heard it said by citizens, that although the "Muktars" (or chiefs of quarters) might be unwilling to give lists of compromised persons belonging to their own quarter, they would not make the same

difficulty regarding those of adjoining quarters, and that in this way much information might be obtained. His Excellency said he would consider these plans, yet he feared he would never be able to satisfy European Governments: that he proposed, however, to continue his present investigations, try such offenders as he could discover, reserving their sentence; that he would then report what he had done, with his opinions of each case; if these were approved sentence could be passed and executed; if not, further investigation might be prosecuted. But that, in any case, he felt it would be necessary in the interest of the Ottoman Government itself to exile for ever from Damascus those influential persons who had been at all compromised by their attitude in the recent outbreak, even where there was no distinct proof of overt acts. That with regard to the property of those executed, including in several instances plunder taken during late events, he had, pending a reference to Constantinople, placed it under sequestration, direct confiscation not being permitted by the Ottoman Code.

I here took the opportunity of mentioning that the Commissioners of the Powers in alliance with Turkey would shortly arrive in Syria, when his Excellency would have it in his power to explain to these officers his whole position, and might count on their best advice and assistance. His Excellency desiring to know the object of the Commission, I replied that I had no information on the subject, but, from newspaper reports, I presumed it to be to inquire into the nature and extent of the late sad events, and to ascertain, in co-operation with his Excellency, how such disasters could be best avoided in the future. With regard to the Druses, his Excellency said he had not decided on any positive line of policy to be pursued until he learnt what might be the demands in this respect of the European powers. That so far as he had yet considered the question, there appeared to be but two ways of dealing with this matter. The first would be, after due consideration, to make certain demands of the Druses, such, for instance, as the surrender of certain chiefs, or other individuals, for trial; the payment of a pecuniary indemnity to the Christians; rebuilding of villages destroyed, &c., leaving it free to the Druses to comply or not. The other course would be to attack them at once without making any demand whatever. That never having either confirmed or set aside, the Treaty of Peace entered into between some of the Druses and Maronites, he was free either to acknowledge or reject it now.

His Excellency having asked which of these I should conceive to be the preferable plan, I replied, provided a sufficient demand were made, I should prefer the first, not less in the interest of the Ottoman Government itself than in that of all others concerned, particularly as it was impossible to foresee where the second course might terminate, and which would yet remain open should the Druses decline compliance with the demands made. His Excellency was strongly of that opinion also, although he would decide nothing until he had an opportunity of consulting with the European Commissioners.

The interview here closed.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. J. FRASER.

No. 170.

Consul-General Moore to Lord J. Russell.—(Received September 20.)
(No. 39.)

My Lord,

Beyrout, September 7, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Lordship's despatch No. 3 of the 17th ultimo, relative to Lord Dufferin's mission to Syria as Her Majesty's Commissioner, and to state that I will carry out the instructions therein given me by your Lordship to the best of my ability.

I beg to inclose copies of three despatches to Her Majesty's Ambassador at the Porte—the two last reporting, amongst other events of public interest, the arrival at Beyrout and reception of Lord Dufferin, and his Lordship's departure for Damascus.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. MOORE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 170.

Consul-General Moore to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, September 3, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of Mr. Lumley's despatches, acquainting me with the receipt of telegrams by your Excellency from Lord John Russell to authorise me to draw the former for 3,000*l.* and the latter for 2,000*l.* more on Messrs. Heywood, Kennard, & Co., for the relief of distressed Syrians.

With reference to the concluding part of Lord John Russell's telegram, transcribed in your Excellency's No. 22, I beg to state that I have already acknowledged to his Lordship in No. 33 to him, inclosure in my despatch of the 18th August to your Excellency, the receipt of authority to draw for the sums previously announced, amounting in all to 2,700*l.*, exclusive of the 5,000*l.* now acknowledged.

I draw for sums on account according to the requirements of the Beyrout Committee; in this way I have hitherto drawn to their order two bills of 500*l.* each.

I have also drawn on Lord John Russell for the 200*l.* Government donation.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. MOORE.

Inclosure 2 in No. 170.

Consul-General Moore to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, September 3, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to inclose copy of my despatch No. 38, with inclosures, to Lord John Russell.

Lord Dufferin arrived at Beyrout yesterday in the Turkish Government steamer "Cairo." I accompanied his Lordship to-day on a visit to the Vali Ahmed Pasha, who had sent a guard of honour and horses to meet Lord Dufferin at the landing-place, and accompany him to the Serai.

Five hundred conscripts of the number recently taken by his Excellency Fuad Pasha, on account of arrears for the army for the past eight years, arrived from Damascus handcuffed, and were embarked yesterday on board a Turkish man-of-war for conveyance to Constantinople.

The French transport "Ganges" also arrived here yesterday towed by another French steamer, the "Indus." A battalion of the 5th Regiment conveyed in her landed this morning. The "Indus" is laden with stores for the army of occupation.

Some Mohametans of Acre have been arrested and brought to Beyrout for trial suspected to be the authors of the placard found affixed to the door of the Greek Church at that place, referred to in the inclosure.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. MOORE.

Inclosure 3 in No. 170.

Consul-General Moore to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, September 5, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Excellency's despatch of the 26th ultimo, acquainting me with the arrival of Lord Dufferin at Constantinople, and giving me certain instructions relative to his Lordship's mission to Syria, to which I beg to say that I will entirely conform.

I have already reported in my despatch of the 3rd instant, Lord Dufferin's arrival at Beyrout on the 2nd instant. I had made the necessary arrangements with the Authorities for his proper reception on landing, previously to which Ahmet

Pasha, at my suggestion, had sent an officer of rank on board to compliment his Lordship on his arrival.

Availing himself of the interval of some days that will elapse before the arrival of his colleagues, Lord Dufferin started last night for Damascus, accompanied by Mr. Cyril Graham, and attended by a Turkish escort obtained by me from Ahmet Pasha. His Lordship's object is to visit that city and see Fuad Pasha. His absence will not, he calculates, exceed a week.

Count Bentivoglio informed me yesterday that M. de Weckbecker, the Austrian Consul-General at Beyrout, has been named Commissioner for Austria. I may be permitted to remark, confidentially, that this departure from the principle of sending Special Commissioners is to be regretted on account of the bias and preconceived opinions inseparable perhaps from local residence, but particularly observable in M. de Weckbecker.

By the last news from Damascus I learn that no further executions had taken place, but that Fuad Pasha had arrested the members of the Grand Medjlis, and that seizures of conscripts continued. Fuad Pasha was expected to leave Damascus in two or three days on a short visit to this place, in consequence, it is understood, of the Envoys sent to communicate with his Excellency by General d'Hautpoul. The sentence pronounced against the ex-Seraskier and Governor-General of Damascus was still kept secret. Many comments are made as to the motives of this reticence.

The Emir Abd-el-Kader had been invested with the Medjidié of the first class, sent to him by the Sultan as a mark of His Majesty's approbation of his conduct during the massacre of Damascus. M. Scheffer also has arrived here, bearing the insignia of the Grand Cordon of the Legion of Honour conferred on the Emir by the Emperor of the French.

I have no change to report in the attitude of the Druses. The petition from the Chiefs, referred to in No. 63, has not yet reached me, a delay which I am at a loss to account for, unless on the supposition that the wily memorialists are awaiting the progress of events before committing themselves by admissions or proposals which need only be made under pressure of extreme urgency. In the meantime, no fugitive Christian ventures to return to his home, such as it is. The consequence is, that these unfortunate people still crowd the sea-coast towns by thousands, enduring the extreme of hardship and privation, and are at once the cause and victims of disease, which, at Beyrout, has carried off hundreds of their children, amongst whom it has been particularly fatal on account of want of proper nourishment.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. MOORE.

No. 171.

Consul-General Moore to Lord J. Russell.—(Received September 20.)
(No. 40.)

My Lord,

Beyrout, September 8, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that the Damascus post came in this morning. My letters announce the arrival in that city of Lord Dufferin, on Thursday, the 5th instant. Fuad Pasha had not then left for Beyrout, which will enable Her Majesty's Commissioner to see his Excellency. This day is mentioned for the departure of Fuad Pasha for this place. Major Fraser writes me that the Turkish military officers inculpated for their conduct at Hasbeya, and Rasheya and Deir-el-Kamar would probably be executed soon. Ahmed Pasha's sentence was still unpublished, being, it was stated, reserved until the trial of Khorsheed Pasha also be completed.

The object of Fuad Pasha's visit to Beyrout is understood to have reference—firstly, to the French expedition, and secondly, to meet the Commissioners of the Great Powers, and ascertain the objects of their mission, and the nature of the relations to subsist between his Excellency and those gentlemen.

Certain it is that the French General is becoming impatient of the inactivity to which he has hitherto been subjected, and has expressed the same to Fuad Pasha.

The Turkish functionaries in Syria appear to be totally unaware of the

appointment of European Commissioners to Syria. When I announced to Ahmet Pasha, the Governor-General of Beyrout, Lord Dufferin's arrival and his Lordship's mission, the Pasha professed entire ignorance of everything relating thereto.

Yesterday a further batch of about 500 conscripts from Damascus reached Beyrout, on their way to the capital. They passed through the town handcuffed; besides the Turkish military escort, they were accompanied from the French camp to the town by a detachment of French Hussars, with drawn sabres. This is said to have been done to prevent the repetition of the disorders which occurred on the occasion of the last arrival of conscripts, and of the insulting language and demeanour used by them towards the French Emperor and nation, and Europeans in general. On that occasion, amongst other incidents, a Damascene Christian pointed out one of the conscripts, exclaiming, "This is the murderer of my brother," with a gesture of rage, when a Turkish soldier of the escort first struck him, and then inflicted a bayonet wound on him. Some French soldiers who were looking on seized the Turkish soldier, and carried him to their Commanding Officer, who sent him to the Serai, where he was tried and punished. Several of these conscripts have been allowed, by order of Fuad Pasha, to buy themselves out for 20,000 piastres per man; some of these are stated to have been amongst the murderers in the late massacre. The Christians say that these men can well afford to pay 20,000 piastres out of the plunder of their co-religionists.

French sentries have been posted, conjointly with the Turkish sentinels, at certain points, and a joint night-patrol established to prevent collision betwixt the French and Turkish soldiery and townspeople.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. MOORE.

No. 172.

Lord Dufferin to Lord J. Russell.—(Received September 20.)

(No. 6.)

Damascus, September 8, 1860.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Lordship's information, copies of despatches which I have addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at the Porte, respecting the state of affairs in this country.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 172.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Damascus, September 8, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to acquaint your Excellency with my arrival in this city.

Although I did not anticipate that any inconvenience would be likely to arise from my visit to Damascus, I thought it prudent to acquaint his Excellency Fuad Pasha with my intention, stating, at the same time, that I came quite in an unofficial capacity, and that should his Excellency be of opinion that it would be at all undesirable I should persevere in my project, I should at once return, and in the meantime would wait on the road, to learn his pleasure; his Excellency having invited me to proceed, I entered the city on the afternoon of Thursday last, and having in the meantime heard a report that his Excellency was himself about to proceed to Beyrout, I waited on him at once, in order that my arrival might not in any degree disarrange his plans. I had, however, the satisfaction of learning that other causes had already induced him to postpone his departure for some little time longer.

His Excellency then proceeded to give me an account of the way in which he had dealt with the persons implicated in the late massacres at Damascus;

Mr. Brant will have already informed your Excellency of the nature of these punishments. Fifty-six persons have been hanged on the charge of murder; 111 irregular soldiers have been shot on the charge of having taken part in the eunte; 139 have been condemned to the galleys for life; 145 have been exiled on the charge of plundering; 186 have been condemned to hard labour for a term of years; and sentence of death has been recorded against 83 persons who have escaped. A considerable number are in prison awaiting their trial.

Other measures of severity have been initiated, and I have the honour to inclose for your Excellency's information, a statement furnished me by Fuad Pasha, of the various acts of rigour which he had thought necessary since his arrival. For the last three weeks there have been no executions.

In reply to some further inquiries, his Excellency was good enough to inform me, that Osman Bey, who had commanded at Hasbeya, Mohammed Ali Bimbashi, at Rasheya, and Ali Bey who was in charge of the troops in the Christian quarter of Damascus, had been condemned to death, and would probably be shortly executed.

In regard to the fate of Ahmet Pasha, his Excellency seemed still undecided, and in mentioning his name, was even careful to speak almost in a laudatory manner, of certain arrangements the ex-Governor had made previous to the outbreak.

On presenting myself to his Excellency, I had taken the precaution of explaining to him, that I had no official communication to make to him whatever, that my instructions were to act in concert with my colleagues, and that if I now ventured to wait upon him he must consider my visit merely that of a former friend and a future colleague. Yesterday his Excellency was good enough to come and see me at the house of Mr. Brant, who has been so kind as to receive me under his roof. During the course of this second conversation, which was also understood to be of an unofficial character, his Excellency requested to know in what sense I interpreted the French "Projet d'instruction," a copy of which he had lately received, whether the Commission was itself to become a tribunal, before whom the accused were to be arraigned, and to what extent its functions were to supersede his own, as Military and Civil Governor of the Province, coupling his inquiries, with a request that I should refer the matter directly to my Government, and inform them, that his proposal was, "That he should be allowed to adjudicate on the cases brought before him, becoming himself responsible to the Commission, for the manner in which he carried on the investigation; that on the same terms he should be permitted to determine on the mode of conducting the military operations against the Druses, and that before the Commission entered upon the discussion of any arrangements for the future, it should be competent for him to take the initiative, submitting to their consideration, whatever plan of his own he might be prepared to propose." I replied, that of course I could not state in what way the Commission might eventually interpret their instructions, but that, in my private opinion, I should expect that they would be anxious to adopt whatever course would be most likely to preserve, in the eyes of its subjects, the dignity of the Porte and the authority of its Representative. I ventured to add, that I felt assured that the sole object which Her Majesty's Government had at heart, was that the Commission should act in such a manner as would be most likely to conduce to the advantage of the Sultan's Government, and the prosperity of his Empire. On taking leave, his Excellency informed me, that the officers he had designated to me on the previous evening as having been condemned to death would probably be shortly executed, and he even implied, though very vaguely, that Ahmet Pasha might possibly have to share their fate.

With the little information I have as yet had time to acquire, it would be premature for me to hazard an opinion as to the character of Fuad Pasha's policy. There is one fact, however, to which I would venture to draw your Excellency's attention. Out of the whole population of Damascus, only fifty-six have been actually executed on a charge of murder: now the lowest computation places the number of Christians massacred in Damascus alone, at 5,000; it is impossible to suppose but that the numbers of the murderers, at all events, equalled the number of their victims. It would not, however, be an improbable conjecture, that in the death of every Christian, at least three Moslems were concerned,

for the butchery seems not to have been conducted by bands of men, proceeding successively from street to street, but to have taken place simultaneously in every part of the Christian quarter. This would raise the number of those who are probably guilty of murder, to 15,000 persons. But murder was not the only description of crime committed; to murder was superadded an universal pillage, the destruction of every single Christian house in the city, and the violation of a large quantity of the Christian women, under circumstances of the most atrocious cruelty. I have been assured by a person, on whose authority I could rely, that there is but a small proportion of Christian girls in all Damascus who have not been ravished. It would certainly seem that fifty-six executions bear but an inadequate relation to the number of guilty persons, and the enormity of their crimes.

If I were to permit myself any criticism on the course Fuad Pasha has been pursuing, I should be inclined to say, that he is adopting every contrivance in his power to impress Europe with an idea of the energy of his resources, while, at the same time, he omits no opportunity of subsequently mitigating their severity. He announces far more than he performs. Had I time I think I could illustrate my meaning in a manner satisfactory to your Excellency.

I have, &c.

(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

P.S.—I have just received intelligence that Ahmet Pasha, Colonel Ali Bey, Colonel Osman Bey, and Muhammed Ali Agha, have been shot. The executions were not public.

D. AND C.

Inclosure 2 in No. 172.

Memorandum.

Damas, le 8 Septembre, 1860.

LE lendemain de l'arrivée de son Excellence Fuad Pacha, occupation de tous les quartiers de la ville par la troupe, formation de Commissions Militaires dans chaque quartier de la ville, pour arrêter les émeutiers, assassins, pilliers, &c. Ces Commissions sont parvenues à arrêter après quatre ou cinq jours de travaux 800 personnes environ, qui ont été remises au Tribunal Extraordinaire, composé de fonctionnaires amenés de Constantinople. Les arrestations ont continué depuis ce jour là. L'Ecole Militaire de la ville a été transformée en hôpital pour les femmes Chrétiennes. Admission dans l'hôpital militaire de tous les Chrétiens malades ou blessés. Formation d'une Commission chargée de distribuer des vivres, de l'argent, et des effets aux Chrétiens. Arrestation de quatre individus qui ont massacré les frères et le père d'une jeune fille, qui a été amenée à Damas avec les assassins de ses parents, et qui a déclaré avoir été violée par l'un d'eux et avoir été possédée, à tour de rôle, par ces malfaiteurs, qui ont été pendus. Sur la condamnation du Tribunal Extraordinaire chargé de juger les personnes incriminées, 111 personnes ont été fusillées, 56 pendues, 145 condamnées à l'exil, 186 aux travaux forcés, et employés aux travaux de construction de routes, 83 à mort, par contumace. Parmi ceux qui ont été exécutés se trouvent 18 individus appartenant à des familles nobles, ou des gens marqués dans le pays. Le 15 Août, ordonnance portée à la connaissance du public, et mettant en demeure tous les habitants de la ville et de la campagne, à remettre aux autorités locales les hommes, femmes, et enfants même ayant embrassé l'Islamisme qu'ils retiendraient chez eux. Toute personne contrevenant à cet ordre était déclarée coupable de recel et condamnée à mort. Tous les Chrétiens, au nombre de 500 environ, qui avaient de gré ou de force embrassé l'Islamisme, ont été mis en demeure de retourner dans la religion de leurs pères. Trois quartiers Musulmans ont été évacués et mis à la disposition des Chrétiens, qui s'y sont installés ou s'y installent. Une maison a été mise à leur disposition, pour servir de chapelle à tous les rites Chrétiens.

Ordonnance condamnant la ville de Damas à fournir 2,000 hommes à l'armée Impériale. Prix de rachat fixé à 20,000 piastres, de ceux qui se trouvent en dehors de 2,000 conscrits et qui appartiennent à des familles nobles. Plus de 1,000 hommes expédiés déjà à Beyrouth pour être dirigés vers Constantinople.

Arrestations journalières pour la conscription. Emprisonnement des personnes accusées par des Chrétiens.

Vendredi, 7 Septembre, réunion, sur la présidence de Fuad Pasha, du Conseil de Guerre, qui a prononcé la dégradation et a condamné à être fusillés—

1. L'ex-Muchir Ahmed Agha;
2. Le Lieutenant-Colonel Ali Bey, Commandant lors des événements, le quartier Chrétien de Damas;
3. Le Lieutenant-Colonel Osman Bey, Commandant la garnison de Hasbéya;
4. Le Chef de bataillon Mehemmed Ali Agha, Commandant la garnison de Raschéya.

En outre le Sous-Commandant de la garnison de Hasbéya, Mehemmed Ali Agha, a été condamné à la dégradation et à la réclusion perpétuelle.

Officiers condamnés à mort et à la dégradation, et dont l'exécution de la sentence est ajournée, leur confrontation avec les accusés qui se trouvent à Beyrouth pouvant être nécessaire:—

Abdul Selam Bey, Lieutenant-Colonel, Commandant à Deir-el-Kamar, condamné à être dégradé et fusillé;

Id. id. pour le Lieutenant-Colonel, Commandant à Bleddin près Deir-el-Kamar.

Id. id. Havis Agha, Sous-Commandant de Deir-el-Camar.

Inclosure 3 in No. 172.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Damascus, September 8, 1860.

IN reference to my despatch of the 3rd instant, marked confidential, I have the honour to state that, on further consideration, I came to the conclusion that, however desirable I might consider it to be that Fuad Pasha should act as independently and as energetically as possible in reference to the unfortunate persons convicted of such atrocious crimes, yet that my instructions would not justify me in allowing him to suppose either that yourself or Her Majesty's Government were prepared to indicate to him the course it might be desirable he should pursue.

I therefore determined, unless he should seem disposed to commit himself publicly to too lenient a sentence, in which case I should have entreated him to pause until the Commission was assembled, to act with extreme caution, and to content myself with ascertaining in favour of what course he himself seemed to incline.

On the occasion of the first conversation I had with him he appeared to me to desire to speak of Ahmet Pasha with some slight degree of favour, though he admitted his guilt was of a nature to deserve the punishment of death. The next day, however, when his Excellency was good enough to call on me, his tone in regard to him seemed somewhat changed, and he even hinted he had thoughts of ordering his immediate execution. From the adoption of such a course I confess I said nothing to discourage him, and I even permitted myself the remark, that the greater the vigour he displayed the less occasion would the Commission find for usurping his authority.

I cannot but think that his Excellency has come to a judicious decision, and I trust that your Excellency will give me permission to intimate to him your approval of his conduct.

It has become necessary Fuad Pasha should leave Damascus for Beyrouth. His absence will, probably, last a considerable time. During the interim it was desirable he should secure the tranquillity of the city by an exhibition of severity, which should renew the impression caused by the vigour of his acts when he first arrived, but which time was beginning to efface. For reasons I have ventured to submit to your Excellency in my last despatch, it was to be wished that so great a responsibility as that entailed by the execution of a Pasha should be assumed by the proper person before the arrival of the Commission; and lastly, this supreme act of justice became a not unfitting

conclusion for the first act in the terrible drama which has been displayed in his country.

The French Consul here, M. Outrey, a remarkably clever man, expressed to me his regret at what he called Fuad Pasha's undue precipitation, but I did not think it necessary to controvert his views. In M. Outrey's opinion, the massacres at Damascus are connected with something which has proceeded from Constantinople. He even goes so far as to attribute them, not indeed to the Ministers of the Sultan—that he disclaims, but to an exaggeration of the general policy of the Porte; and he argues that, by Ahmet Pasha's death, we shall lose the clue to the conspiracy. It would have been, however, a sufficient reply to this objection to state, that the pending trials of Khoorshid Pasha, Tahir Pasha, and many others, all of whom must be cognizant of such a plot, should it indeed exist, would give ample opportunities for eliciting the truth.

I am convinced that, in ordering the execution of Ahmet Pasha, his Excellency has acted in the interest of his Government. Any acts of severity to which it may be necessary for the Commission to urge him hereafter will appear to occur less at their dictation than as the natural sequence of a line of policy his Excellency will have already inaugurated.

I have, &c.

(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 4 in No. 172.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Damascus, September 8, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that, in compliance with the instructions contained in a despatch from Lord John Russell, No. 8 of the 14th ultimo, immediately on my arrival at Damascus, I brought under Fuad Pasha's consideration the case of the unfortunate girls and women that are supposed to have been carried off to Moslem harems during the late disturbances. In reply, his Excellency assured me, that in consequence of his having denounced the penalty of death against every Moslem who should retain prisoner any Christian woman, he had reason to believe that all those who had been so unfortunate as to be carried off were already restored to their friends. Such, however, I fear, is far from being the case; at the same time it will be most difficult even to ascertain if any are missing. The native Christian families are so broken up that no mother can be certain whether her child has suffered death or been carried off. Even when there is a probability in favour of the latter alternative, no clue can be obtained as to the harem in which she may be secluded, for many have, doubtless, been transferred to great distances by Koords and others, and will probably be sold. In the meantime I have taken measures to ascertain, both at Beyrouth and at Damascus, the number and the names of the missing girls and children of both sexes. One other chance presented itself, which I have not thought it prudent to neglect. There is resident at Damascus an English lady, now married to an Arab Sheikh. From her peculiar position she has freer access to the native harems than any other European. She has been good enough to promise to use every effort to second our endeavours, and I have intimated to her that I should be ready to place a certain sum of money at her disposal, to be employed in procuring suitable emissaries to discover where the poor unfortunates remaining in Damascus may be hid.

I confess I do not anticipate great success from her exertions, but it seemed that perhaps through her instrumentality alone could anything be accomplished.

I have, &c.

(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 5 in No. 172.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Damascus, September 8, 1860.

I THINK it is as well to report to your Excellency the substance of a conversation I had with M. de Beaufort d'Hautpoul, the General in command of the French troops at Beyrout. The General having been good enough to call upon me at Paris, immediately upon my arrival in Syria, I proceeded to return his visit. During the course of our conversation, which was strictly of an unofficial character, he informed me that he and his army having remained inactive for three weeks at Beyrout, and the Druses still being in triumphant possession of Maronite villages, within an hour's march of his camp, while their unfortunate inhabitants were lying about the streets of the town; he had intimated to Fuad Pasha his intention of commencing the campaign on his own responsibility, unless his Excellency would at once indicate to him in what way he wished to employ him. I am bound to add that nothing could be more moderate than the language in which this somewhat energetic resolve was couched. It is in consequence of this summons on the part of the French General that Fuad Pasha has started this evening for Beyrout. His Excellency stated incidentally to me that the impatience of the French General caused him great uneasiness, that he was afraid any premature movement upon the part of the French troops might compromise the arrangements he himself had made for conducting the campaign against the Druses, and that it was his object to use his utmost endeavours to induce M. de Beaufort to postpone his intentions until the arrival of the Commissioners.

I believe Fuad Pasha's plan is to intercept the escape of the Druses from the Lebanon to the Hauren, by an intervening cordon composed of powerful Arab tribes.

In a few days I shall be able to give your Excellency fuller information on this point.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 6 in No. 172.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Damascus, September 8, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to inclose for your Excellency's information a copy of a confidential despatch I have addressed to his Excellency Fuad Pasha on the subject of Mr. Graham's murder.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 7 in No. 172.

Lord Dufferin to Fuad Pasha.

Excellence,

Damas, le Septembre 8, 1860.

J'AI l'honneur de remettre à votre Excellence une brève note à l'égard du meurtre de M. Graham, un de nos Missionnaires.

Votre Excellence s'apercevra qu'il y a quelque incertitude sur l'identité du meurtrier.

Mais cela ne soit pas nous étonner lorsqu'on réfléchit sur les circonstances dans lesquelles le crime fut commis, et que peut-être pas un seul de ceux qui ont été témoins du meurtre ne trouve dans son intérêt de dénoncer le criminel et de le mettre entre les mains de la justice.

En même tems il n'existe pas la moindre doute qu'il y a plusieurs personnes qui seraient à même de donner à votre Excellence les renseignements nécessaires sur ce sujet, et j'espère que par les efforts et le zèle de la police

votre Excellence apprendra pour certain les noms des individus qui sont coupables, et parviendra à les faire arrêter.

J'espère que votre Excellence me pardonnera si j'affirme que je le regarde comme une mesure de première importance que les meurtriers de ce monsieur soient puni avec la dernière sévérité.

Votre Excellence ne manquera pas de voir quel c'est absolument nécessaire que la population de Damas soit convaincu que la Porte est résolu d'entourer de la protection la plus inviolable les personnes de tous les Européens qui se trouvent dans la ville. Les Chrétiens de ce province peuvent au moins se fier pour leur sécurité à leur connaissance de la langue et des mœurs du pays, mais un Européen n'a d'autre garantie pour sa sécurité que celle qui provient de l'inviolabilité attachée à sa personne par le Gouvernement Ottoman. J'oserais ainsi soumettre à votre Excellence que si vous eussiez la bonne fortune de découvrir les meurtriers de M. Graham, il serait à désirer que l'exécution soit conduite d'une manière si publique et si formelle qu'elle fasse une vive et permanente impression sur la population de Damas, et qu'elle leur soit à jamais un exemple du danger qui leur attend si ils osent mettre leur main sur un Européen.

Mais laissant le dénouement de cette triste affaire entre les mains de votre Excellence, je me tourne à l'accomplissement d'un devoir beaucoup plus agréable.

C'est celui de remercier votre Excellence de l'aimable et gracieuse réception que vous avez bien voulu me donner. Je ne dirai pas combien j'ai su apprécier la manière bienveillante dans laquelle votre Excellence m'a fait sentir que c'est votre désir d'établir les relations que j'aurai l'honneur d'avoir avec vous sur le pied d'une amitié sincère et cordiale.

Je puis vous assurer que rien ne manquera de ma part pour mériter votre confiance.

En quittant l'Angleterre mon Gouvernement m'a prévenu qu'il était son désir que tous mes efforts soient dirigés à maintenir l'autorité de votre Excellence dans l'exécution de vos tristes devoirs, et il n'est pas nécessaire de vous dire avec quelle cordialité je m'empresserai d'accomplir cette tâche.

Je n'ai qu'à regretter que l'appui et l'encouragement que mon Gouvernement désire vous donner ne soit moins efficace qu'il n'aurait pu l'être si quelque personne d'une plus grande expérience eusse été choisi pour le représenter.

Votre Excellence a eu la bonté de me dire que je pourrai me permettre de vous adresser non seulement en ma capacité officielle de Commissaire de Sa Majesté, mais aussi comme votre ami personnel.

En faisant part à votre Excellence de tems en tems des vues de mon Gouvernement j'espère que ne m'oublierai jamais la déférence et le respect qui sont dues à la haute position, aux grands talents, et au caractère personnel de votre Excellence, et si jamais j'oserai profiter de la permission que vous m'avez donné de soumettre à votre considération mes opinions particulières sur un sujet quelconque je prierai votre Excellence de se rappeler que c'est votre bonté qui m'aura encouragé et que ce sera avec la plus haute appréciation de l'indulgence de votre Excellence que j'oserai profiter d'un tel privilège.

Agréez, &c.
(Signé) DUFFERIN.

No. 173.

Sir H. Bulwer to Lord J. Russell.—(Received September 21.)

(No. 601.)

My Lord,

Therapia, September 12, 1860.

IMMEDIATELY on the receipt of your Lordship's despatch No. 455 of August 30, on the subject of the unfortunate women who were carried off by the Druses, I addressed an official note to Aali Pasha, and a despatch to Lord Dufferin, copies of which I have the honour to inclose herewith.

I also wrote to Fuad Pasha in the sense of your Lordship's instruction, and I doubt not that his Excellency, in conjunction with his colleagues, will use his utmost efforts in rescuing these unfortunate persons from their lamentable situation.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. L. BULWER.

Inclosure 1 in No. 173.

Sir H. Bulwer to Aali Pasha.

Sir,

Therapia, September 11, 1860.

YOUR Highness is no doubt already aware that Her Majesty's Government considers the condition of the unfortunate Christian women who have been carried off by the Druses and other rebels as the question which demands the earliest attention of the Commissioners sent to Syria, and that Lord Dufferin is instructed to press upon Fuad Pasha and his European colleagues the necessity of taking immediate measures for rescuing from their lamentable situation those unfortunate women whose sufferings call forth the strongest feelings of sympathy on the part of all Christian nations.

I am therefore instructed by Her Majesty's Government to press this matter most urgently on the Porte, and to say that it admits of no delay; and at the same time to request that the necessary instructions be at once forwarded to Fuad Pasha directing him, in conjunction with his European colleagues, to take prompt measures for attaining the object in view, and also for taking such steps as may appear most advisable in order to provide for the maintenance of these poor women until they can find permanent homes and means of subsistence.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. L. BULWER.

Inclosure 2 in No. 173.

Sir H. Bulwer to Lord Dufferin.

My Lord,

Therapia, September 11, 1860.

YOU are already aware of the views of Her Majesty's Government with respect to the Christian women who have been carried off by the Druses and other rebels, and whose condition demands the earliest attention of the Commission in rescuing them from their lamentable condition.

In consequence of further instructions which I have received from Her Majesty's Government on this subject, I have addressed an official note to Aali Pasha, copy of which I have the honour to inclose herewith for your information, and I doubt not that the necessary instructions will be at once sent to Fuad Pasha to give the matter his earliest attention.

I need not assure your Lordship of my readiness to afford you my aid in this matter, but not knowing precisely the way in which I can further assist you, I leave the matter in your hands, confident that your Lordship, with the support of your colleagues and Fuad Pasha, to whom I have also written on the subject, will succeed in rescuing, if not all, at least the greatest number, of these unfortunate persons from their present terrible situation.

I am, &c.
(Signed) H. L. BULWER.

No. 174.

Sir H. Bulwer to Lord J. Russell.—(Received September 21.)
(No. 602.)

My Lord,

Therapia, September 12, 1860.

I HAVE the honor to inclose, herewith, a précis of late despatches addressed to me by Her Majesty's Consuls in Syria having reference to passing events in that province.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. L. BULWER.

Inclosure in No. 174.

Précis of late Despatches from Her Majesty's Consuls in Syria to Sir H. Bulwer, up to August 29.

PROPER measures have been taken by the Turkish authorities to put a stop to disorders in the neighbourhood of Sidon and to coerce the Druses if necessary.

The ex-Seraskier and Governor-General of Damascus has been sent back to Damascus with the other military officers, under arrest, to take their trial.

About 5,100 French troops, including 200 cavalry, have arrived at Beyrout, with immense stores and ammunition, and mules for the carriages of field-pieces. The French occupation is viewed with the utmost aversion by the Mahomedans, whilst the Christians are overjoyed at the arrival of the French. Neither Christians nor Mussulmans disguise their feelings. The irritation of the latter breaks out occasionally in sneers and insults to the former, but owing to the timely arrival of Ahmed Kaiserli Pasha, and the energetic steps taken by him, added to a proclamation issued by him, no disturbances are likely to occur in Beyrout.

Whilst, on the one hand, relief and security have followed the appearance of the French, on the other hand, much disappointment is expressed at the non-arrival of English troops, whose presence, people say, would have calmed and reassured the Mahometans.

News from Damascus is satisfactory—the executions had commenced. On the 20th instant a considerable number of rioters, including some notables, were hanged and shot—and a large number also of the less guilty were to be sent as prisoners to Beyrout for embarkation for Constantinople.

The Druses continue to maintain the same attitude and determination as heretofore.

Mr. Brant, writing from Damascus, spoke at first very highly of the energetic conduct of Fuad Pasha; there is some little difference in the tone of his late despatches. His Excellency talks of imposing a fine of 25,000,000 piastres to indemnify the sufferers. It has been ascertained with tolerable accuracy that about 3,500 Christians, exclusive of 2,000 more who took refuge in Damascus, were massacred. Daas Agha, Commander of the Irregulars, has been arrested; the trial of persons arrested continues, and a list of all those who are or may be condemned, will be given to Mr. Brant.

The ex-Seraskier has been tried, but his sentence is not yet published. Osman Bey of Hasbeya is under trial. Sheikh Abdallah-el-Halabee, the Chief of the Ulemas of Damascus, and considered as a Saint, has been arrested, which has created much sensation. Mufti Ghoeze Efendi, Mohamed Said Bey, both very influential men, have also been taken. 2,000 Christian families are lodged in one of the best Turkish quarters of the city, and three other Moslem quarters are to be given up for the Christians.

At the suggestion of Mr. Brant that the property of the condemned should be confiscated, in order to compensate the Christians, Fuad Pasha said that confiscation was no longer legal.

General d'Hautpoul proposes going to Damascus to see Fuad Pasha.

Attempts are being made by the French party to establish Christian rule throughout the Lebanon under a Shehab, and Emir Mejid and Emir Kaïs are the candidates spoken of.

No. 175.

Lord J. Russell to Sir H. Bulwer.

(No. 529.)

(Extract.)

Foreign Office, September 22, 1860.

I SAW M. Musurus yesterday, and expressed to him a qualified satisfaction at the punishments inflicted by Fuad Pasha at Damascus.

I pointed out to him that Khoorshid Pasha had not yet been tried, and that the Christians driven from their homes had not yet returned to them.

No. 176.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received September 22.)

(No. 1,238.)

My Lord,

Paris, September 21, 1860.

I HAVE spoken to M. Thouvenel, as instructed by your Lordship's despatch No. 967 of the 15th instant, relative to the French forces in Syria, with a view of ascertaining how long they were likely to remain, and whether it would be necessary to reinforce them.

M. Thouvenel replied that he was without any information which would enable him to answer my questions. I had accidentally seen the Minister of War previously, and I had put similar questions to his Excellency, who answered as M. Thouvenel had done. General Beaufort, he added, had gone to Damascus to put himself in communication with Fuad Pasha, and his next reports would probably throw more light upon the future. Marshal Randon did not anticipate the necessity of sending reinforcements unless operations were to be undertaken by the European troops. Fuad Pasha was said to be at the head of 15,000 men, a force amply sufficient to keep the country quiet.

M. Thouvenel appeared to think that the Commission would best be enabled to judge when the French troops could return, and he expressed apprehensions that this would hardly be possible for the moment, as there would be great danger of a reaction on their departure.

I reminded M. Thouvenel that the season was fast approaching when the coast of Syria would become dangerous for the squadrons, and when the landing of reinforcements would become a matter of difficulty, and I said that were it deemed necessary to send reinforcements Her Majesty's Government were prepared to furnish a part of them. His Excellency expressed great satisfaction at this announcement.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

No. 177.

Lord J. Russell to Earl Cowley.

(No. 951.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, September 22, 1860.

I HAVE received your despatch No. 123 of the 21st instant, reporting a conversation with M. Thouvenel with reference to the stay of the French troops in Syria, and the necessity for reinforcing them by the dispatch of the remaining number of troops specified in the Convention, of which, in case they were required, Her Majesty's Government would be prepared to send a portion.

I have to state to your Excellency, in reply, that the season is getting too late for the safe landing of such reinforcements on the coast of Syria, and Her Majesty's Government's hope they will not be needed.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 178.

Sir H. Bulwer to Lord J. Russell.—(Received September 24.)

(No. 597.)

My Lord,

Therapia, September 12, 1860.

I INCLOSE your Lordship a list of the persons condemned at Damascus for their share in the late massacre. I am sorry to say that Mr. Brant does not think it includes all the principal parties.

I am going to speak to Aali Pasha immediately on the subject.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. L. BULWER.

Inclosure in No. 178.

List of Persons condemned to Death by Fuad Pasha.

[See Inclosure in No. 168.]

No. 179.

Lord J. Russell to Lord Dufferin.

(No. 12.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, September 24, 1860.

I HAVE received your despatch No. 6 of the 8th instant, inclosing copies of your several despatches of the 8th of September addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, respecting the state of affairs in Syria, and I have to acquaint you that Her Majesty's Government approve your conduct as reported in those despatches.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 180.

Lord Dufferin to Lord J. Russell.—(Received September 26.)

(No. 4.)

My Lord,

Beyrout, September 3, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith for your Lordship's information copies of further despatches which I have this day addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, in conformity with the instructions contained in your Lordship's despatch No. 2 of July 31.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 180.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, September 3, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to inform you that I arrived here yesterday afternoon in a steam-yacht, which his Highness El Hami Pasha, son-in-law to the Sultan, and a personal friend of my own, was good enough to place at my disposal.

As yet none of my European colleagues have reached Beyrout. The Austrian Commissioner had not been appointed when I quitted Constantinople. The Russian and Prussian Commissioners were not to leave that city until Wednesday, the 5th instant, and the steamer which is to bring M. Bécclard from Alexandria is still at anchor in this bay; it is not probable, therefore, that the Commission can meet for another eight or ten days.

Under these circumstances I propose, in obedience to my instructions, to put myself at once into communication with his Excellency Fuad Pasha, the Turkish Commissioner, and to employ the time which must necessarily elapse before our other colleagues can assemble, in acquainting myself with the actual position of affairs, and the state of the country.

With this double object in view, I have arranged to start to-night for Damascus. I shall remain there probably three or four days, and then return to Beyrout in time to meet my colleagues on their arrival.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 2 in No. 180.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, September , 1860.

IMMEDIATELY upon my arrival at Beyrout I put myself into confidential communication with Admiral Martin, the Commander-in-chief, and with Mr. Moore, Her Majesty's Consul-General.

I have been informed by these gentlemen, and a private letter addressed to me by Major Fraser from Damascus, under date of the 30th of August, confirms their report, that Achmet Pasha, late Governor of the city, has been tried, condemned, and sentenced, but that his sentence, whatever it may be, has not been yet made public.

Your Excellency has been good enough to instruct me that, in your opinion it is a matter of great importance that a due measure of justice should be promptly dealt out to those who are chiefly responsible for what has lately occurred in this unhappy province. The instructions I have received from home are conceived in the same spirit. Under these circumstances it seems to me desirable that I should lose no time in communicating to his Excellency Fuad Pasha your Excellency's opinions and the sentiments of Her Majesty's Government in regard to the line of conduct it is expected he will pursue towards the man, to whose imbecility, or to whose connivance the atrocities committed at Damascus may be mainly attributed.

In delaying to pronounce sentence upon this egregious offender, his Excellency may be influenced either by a desire to await the arrival of the Commission in order to compel them to share the odium he is likely to incur by exercising a due severity upon a personage of such rank and importance as the Pasha, or by a habit of hesitation not I believe altogether foreign to his Excellency's character.

In the event of the first supposition proving correct, I shall venture to submit to his Excellency's consideration whether it might not be very undesirable that so grave a function as the punishment of crime should appear to be exercised at foreign dictation rather than proceed from the spontaneous exertion of those plenary powers which have been entrusted to him by his Government for the express purpose of assuming the execution of full and speedy justice on the guilty. If, on the other hand, I should perceive the delay to arise from infirmity of purpose, or an ill-placed regard to clemency, I shall endeavour to represent to his Excellency that the cause of humanity will be best served by such a signal example being now given as will be calculated to prevent for the future so fatal a dereliction of duty on the part of persons placed in high authority, and the consequent repetition of similar scenes of carnage.

It is possible, however, that the intentions of the Turkish High Commissioner may be of a different nature. As yet, I believe, Fuad Pasha has dealt with few or none but native Syrians. The degree of punishment he is prepared to mete out to the higher Turkish officials implicated in the commission of these crime is as yet unknown. It is possible he may seek by the execution of a mass of meaner criminals to engage Europe to remit the pertinacity with which she is prepared to insist on the punishment of those who from their high station were most responsible for what has occurred. The sentence he now holds over the head of Achmet Pasha may be so culpably lenient as altogether to disappoint the expectation of the Christian Governments, yet that sentence once promulgated, and his Excellency once publicly committed to it, it would be become almost irrevocable.

It is in the contemplation of such a contingency that I have considered it my duty to take the earliest opportunity of pressing on the consideration of his Excellency the opinions your Excellency has wished me to convey to him.

Should I find that my representations are ineffectual, that it is impossible to induce his Excellency to refrain from exhibiting a lenity as inconsiderate as it is partial, I shall entreat him, at all events, to pause before he compromises his liberty of action, by publicly committing himself to a sentence he might hereafter be anxious to recall, until he shall have had an opportunity of consulting with the European Commissioners now on their way to Syria. It is most

inspiration, that the justice of the Porte should appear to be the result of foreign undesirable but even this is a lesser evil than that an attempt should be made to whitewash, in the blood of an ignorant and fanatical populace, the responsible personages who either instigated or connived at their excesses.

In bringing this subject under his Excellency's notice, I shall, of course, carefully abstain from indicating the character of the penalty it might be desirable to inflict on the late Governor of Damascus. That must be measured by the nature of his guilt, and the extent of his connivance in the late massacres. Imbecility, however disastrous in its consequences, may seem to fall short of the extremity of guilt. A distinction might be drawn between a reluctant compliance, the result of terror, and a malicious complicity. But with the terrible responsibility of deciding between such delicate shades of culpability, I am sure it is not the wish of Her Majesty's Government that I should charge myself.

The high functionary who constituted the tribunal before whom the culprits have been arraigned, who has superintended all its proceedings, who has investigated the evidence, and into whose hands his Sovereign has confided the sword of justice and an unlimited power of life and death, must singly undertake to exercise the powers confided to his patriotism and to his discretion.

I shall simply confine myself to reminding his Excellency that the eyes of Europe are upon him, and that upon the energy and impartiality which he now exhibits will probably depend his own reputation as a statesman, and the stability of the throne he serves.

As I am well aware that it is the wish of Her Majesty's Government that the Commissioners of the Five Powers should always act in concert, I intend that my communications with his Excellency Fuad Pasha should be strictly of a confidential and unofficial character.

I shall be careful, also, to press upon his immediate consideration, though equally in an unofficial form, the case of the Christian women that have been forcibly carried off to Mussulman harems.

In conclusion, I can only say that I trust your Excellency will approve of the line of conduct that I have thus traced out for myself. I am painfully aware of the responsibility I am undertaking. My inexperience naturally leads me to entertain misgivings to which a person more used to such situations might be insensible, but I feel that the state of affairs in this country is so critical that the best way in which I can show my sense of the confidence Her Majesty's Government has been pleased to place in me will be by endeavouring to act with energy and decision.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

P.S.—I have reason to believe that the number of French troops here amounts to 7,200.

D.

No. 181.

Consul Brant to Lord J. Russell.—(Received September 29.)

(No. 17.)

My Lord,

Damascus, September 6, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to inclose herewith copy of my despatch of the 30th ultimo to his Excellency Sir H. L. Bulwer, regarding the conduct of the ex-Mushir during the late disturbances, and giving some of the casues of the massacre at Damascus.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JAS. BRANT.

Consul Brant to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Damascus, August 30, 1860.

I HAD the honour to receive your Excellency's despatch No. 8, Confidential, and I beg to assure your Excellency that your sympathy and approbation gave me no small degree of satisfaction, and I feel grateful for the kind manner in which it was expressed.

I cannot say that the most perfect calmness on the part of all my colleagues would have changed materially the result of the outbreak, for nothing, I believe, would have given self-possession to the ex-Mushir. A very slight degree of courage on his part would have prevented the calamity, but when he allowed the ill-disposed to work out their own will unchecked, and left in abeyance so completely his functions as head of the Government, nothing could be done by the subordinate employés.

I observed to Ahmet Pasha that when the Mussulman boys were set to sweep the streets of the Christian quarter in chains, precautions should have been taken to repress a possible outbreak; he replied that it would have been useless, as the plot was prepared, and, had not this pretext been found, some other would have served the purpose. I then asked him what was then done by the secret police, of whose activity and intelligence he had boasted, that he was not informed of the plot; to this he gave no answer. At one time, however, he pretended that there was a plot, at another that no such existed. I have not yet seen any distinct evidence that an organised plot was formed. The disposition to plunder and murder the Christians no doubt was very strong, but the exhibition of vigour on the part of the Government, it is universally acknowledged, would have repressed it.

The soldiers recruited in Syria were not to be depended on, as was evident from their conduct at Hasbeya and Rasheya, and these very men were those selected to guard the Christian quarter on the occasion of the Beiram, and to repress the outbreak. This certainly looked suspicious, but I believe the real reason was that the Mushir was afraid of them, and wished to remove them from the Serai, and preserve for his own protection—which alone seemed to occupy his thoughts—the well-disposed men.

The ex-Mushir is now on his trial, and must justify his conduct and explain his motives as best he can. What goes on is kept quite secret, so that none but the members of the Court are cognisant of the proceedings. The public mind must judge of them by the final result, which is self-evident if the cause be decided, not by favour but by the justice of the case.

If the surmise of the people be correct there will inevitably be concealment, but I will not suppose the surmise alluded to to have any foundation, and I will not anticipate so blameable a course from his Excellency Fuad Pasha, from the suspicion of which, I think, his proceedings thus far should exempt him.

In my opinion Ahmet Pasha is guilty of gross incapacity in his mode of treating his Medjlis, and in not taking precautionary measures often suggested to him; of obstinacy, in maintaining in his post his Tufenkgee Bashi, who was notoriously incompetent, against the repeated warnings of persons of all classes, for weeks before the outbreak; for not endeavouring to rescue the Christians of Hasbeya and Rasheya, although he repeatedly promised to do so, being warned of their danger; for not making any effort to prevent the attack on Zahleh; for perfect indifference to at least, if not connivance at, the massacres of the Christians by the Druses, regarding which he is reported to have said that there were two great evils in Syria, the Christians and the Druses, and that the massacres of either party was a gain to the Turkish Government; for the most extraordinary want of foresight as to the consequences of what was going on, and, when matters became more critical, of being still more obstinate and inactive, until at last he appeared to be paralyzed by fear; for never appearing without the Serai at the head of his troops, either to prevent the outbreak at the commencement, or to check the massacre afterwards, or even to arrest the conflagration. For such neglect of duty, and incapacity in an employé of his high rank, and for such arrant cowardice in a General Officer, by which the lives of probably 10,000 Christians were sacrificed, besides the intense misery

occasioned to twice as many by wounds and sufferings, by loss of parents and relations, and of property; by the disgrace brought on his Sovereign, by the ruin on his country, and the indelible stain on his religious faith, supposing even nothing but incapacity for his high functions and cowardice as an officer be proved, the punishment of a disgraceful death has been merited.

It would indeed produce most lamentable consequences were this contest to degenerate into a religious conflict; but such a result is not improbable, unless very great discretion and forbearance be enforced on the Christians of the Lebanon. Their conduct, for some years past, has been marked by an intolerant and irritating spirit; and at Beyrout, now they have taken courage at the presence of French troops, they have directly become insolent and provoking towards the Mussulmans, and if such behaviour be not severely repressed by their religious Chiefs, great inconvenience will result.

The incidents of the war, in which Druses and Maronites were alone concerned, must be considered apart from the massacres at Hasbeya, Rasheya, and Deir-el-Kamar, which were perpetrated in cold blood after the Christians had surrendered their arms on their safety being guaranteed by the Turkish officers commanding the garrisons. It might have been impossible for the authorities to have hindered or arrested the war, but it was in their power to have prevented the massacres, and therefore they may be charged with having allowed them. This gives to these massacres a character of enormity, independent of the war. The massacre of Damascus was no further connected with the war than as that it afforded a good pretext for the outbursting of a long pent-up hatred of Christians, and that the passions of lawless men once excited, they were ready to join in any acts of murder and plunder.

With respect to the causes which produced the fanatical feelings of the Damascenes, it is of long standing, and is only an old wound re-opened. Up to the period of the Egyptian occupation, fanaticism reigned unchecked in Damascus. It then received a severe blow, beneath which it was crushed temporarily, and was not allowed to revive while the province was attached to Egypt. Since the restoration of Syria to the Sultan, the local Government has been yearly becoming more lax, and fanaticism has been gradually reviving. Since the close of the Russian war, it has made a more marked advance, and the Porte itself has used it as one of the means of diminishing European influence; this was, of course, done secretly, but it was pretty evident to superficial observers even, for the disguise was too transparent not to allow the purpose to be seen through it.

In the last two years it was remarked that abuse of Christians, and terms of reproach towards their faith were more frequently used than formerly. Boys threw stones at Christians and Europeans in the streets, and respectable Mussulmans passing and witnessing these outrages did not reprove the authors of them. When the war between the Druses and Christians broke out, these impertinences were more frequent, but the authorities did not increase in vigilance, and the ill-disposed became more bold. The respectable inhabitants did not to my knowledge encourage these acts, neither did I hear they discouraged them, they seemed to treat them with indifference. A large bell, lately placed in the Maronite Church, gave great umbrage. The magnificent Lazarist Convent was not seen with pleasure. The splendid houses built by the rich class of Christians excited jealousy, and their general prosperity tended to create in the Mussulmans feelings of envy. The persons who managed the affairs of the Pashalic were Christians; they kept the public accounts, and grew rich in the employment. The Christian traders were more prosperous than the Mussulmans; in short, the intelligence and industry of the former bore its natural fruits, but the pride of the latter was all the more deeply wounded. All these circumstances annoyed the Mussulmans, and they felt their inferiority as well in influence as in riches, and it rankled in their breasts; no doubt, therefore, these people were not sorry to see the Christians humbled. Perhaps your Excellency will consider the foregoing—added to the impotence of the local authorities in repressing the misconduct of the Mussulmans towards their Christian neighbours—as sufficiently accounting for an outbreak without the existence of an organized plot, when the ill-timed exercise of severity by the Tufenkgee Bashi produced the explosion. The Arab portion of the troops were excited by the desire of seizing the Christian women, and were greedy of booty, having tasted both at Hasbeya and Rasheya; and they were, therefore,

eager to promote, rather than suppress, a movement which would gratify their lustful passions and their love of plunder.

I have already stated that no conduct on the part of my colleagues would have altered the course of events. I need not therefore refer further to them, nor to the question of what was the result of unpremeditated accident, and what of premeditated design, on which subject I have sufficiently enlarged. With respect to Fuad Pasha, it would be difficult to form a correct estimate at the present moment. His Excellency has acted with decision, though some persons think that he might have been less scrupulous on such an extraordinary occasion by awarding punishment on slighter evidence, as it was notoriously difficult to obtain all that would have been desirable in ordinary cases. The course adopted by his Excellency may ultimately lead to as full a discovery of everything as could have been made by a more direct but less formal proceeding, and his Excellency must be judged by the result of the inquiry when terminated, and by the completeness of his final success. He never probably could have imagined how difficult it was to obtain proofs of what had passed, nor of the number of respectable persons implicated, who thwarted him at every step; this has only gradually opened on his mind, and has rendered his course less prompt and decided than it would have been under different circumstances. I hope his Excellency may apply the remedies necessary to a final settlement with uncompromising sternness; it is needed to break the pride and fanaticism of the people, which have been so greatly excited and so much increased by the whole affair. The time is not yet come to think of conciliation, and it would be impolitic and prejudicial until the supremacy of the Government is firmly established throughout the country. It is difficult to conceive how the Government is to be made strong when the agents to be employed are in general so incompetent. Where are energetic and enlightened Pashas to be found? I confess I have only met with one in my experience possessing both energy and enlightened views, and that is Fuad Pasha. Safti Pasha enjoys a high reputation among the Damascenes, to whom he is known. If he be the man he is represented, and could be persuaded to accept the post, and be allowed to remain in it for five or ten years it might be a good arrangement. Khaleb Pasha, Ferik of the troops, and second in command here, formerly an officer in Ibrahim Pasha's army, is, I have heard from many, an honest, clear-headed, and energetic man, who would probably make a good Civil Governor. I have yet to answer the circulars sent with the despatch I am now replying to, but some of the subjects require consideration and time to explain what your Excellency requires me to report on. I will do so as early as possible, trusting your Excellency will pardon a little delay.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JAS. BRANT.

No. 181a.

Consul-General Moore to Lord J. Russell.—(Received September 29.)

(No. 43.)

My Lord,

Beyrout, September 14, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to inclose copy of my despatch of the 11th instant to Her Majesty's Ambassador at the Porte, announcing the execution of Ahmet Pasha and other Turkish military officers at Damascus.

When that despatch was written I had only received the bare announcement, and had but time to communicate the intelligence as it had reached me. I beg to recur to the subject, for the purpose of recording the high credit which this unprecedented act of justice reflects upon Fuad Pasha. His Excellency merits the highest applause for the firmness which pronounced, and the courage which carried out a sentence vindicating at once the claims of humanity and the honour of his Government, and it is only after a full consideration of the attendant circumstances, a highly excited and fierce populace, a natural feeling of sympathy with a co-religionist, and one of the rank and dignity of the late Field-Marshal, a cause which in the eyes of the majority of Mahometans falls short of crime, that the full merit of the act can be appreciated.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. MOORE.

Inclosure in No. 181a.

Consul-General Moore to Sir H. Bulwer.

Beyrout, September 11, 1860.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report to your Excellency that Ahmet Pasha, the ex-Seraskier and Governor-General of Damascus, together with Osman Bey, Commandant of the garrison of Hasbeya, the Binbashi of Rasheya, and Ali Bey, the officer in command of the troops in the Christian quarter of Damascus during the massacre, were shot in that city on the 8th instant, by order of Fuad Pasha. His Excellency left immediately after the executions and arrived here yesterday.

Lord Dufferin also returned to Beyrout this morning.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. MOORE.

No. 181b.

Consul-General Moore to Lord J. Russell.—(Received September 29.)

(No. 44.)

My Lord,

Beyrout, September 14, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to report the arrival of M. Béclard and M. Novikow, the French and Russian Commissioners to Syria. The Prussian Commissioner is daily expected. It is to-day reported that the appointment of M. de Weckbecker, on the part of Austria, is cancelled, and that Count Ludolf is named in his stead.

To-day Fuad Pasha issued summonses to thirty-seven Druse and thirty-five Christian Chiefs, to appear at Beyrout within five days, failing which they will be judged by default. Several of the Druse Beys, however, amongst them Beshir Bey Neked and Huttar Bey Amed, have already fled towards the Hauran, together with the inhabitants of Bâakleen, a considerable Druse village, and the surrounding district, who, with their Chiefs, the Hamadés, took a prominent part in the massacres.

As for Saïd Bey Djomblat, he has to-day applied to me for a formal assurance of safety, when he would obey the summons and come to Beyrout, failing which he is prepared to fly. I have referred his letter to Lord Dufferin, for his Lordship's consideration and decision, with which I will acquaint your Lordship in a postscript if in time.

The Porte's Commissioner has just organized an Extraordinary Commission to try the accused, similar to the one his Excellency had established at Damascus. Several Mahometans of Beyrout, who took part in the riot of the 23rd June last, have fled, fearing that they may have to answer for their conduct on that occasion. It is now ascertained that they also joined the irregular troops in pillaging and setting fire to the villages in the Plain of Beyrout.

The French troops have not yet moved, though very impatient to do so. General d'Hautpoul is pressing Fuad Pasha on the subject, but no definite arrangement, it is understood, has yet resulted from the conferences between the Porte's Commissioner and the General-in-chief.

There is a good deal of sickness among the French troops, and several deaths have occurred.

The number of distressed refugees on the list of our local Committee now amounts to 12,333, in daily receipt of relief from the Committee. Three thousand more are subsisted at Sidon, through an agent of the Committee in that town.

The mortality amongst the poor refugees is very great at Beyrout; as many as twenty died yesterday from exposure to the alternate heat of the day and the chills of the night.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. MOORE.

No. 181c.

Lord Dufferin to Lord J. Russell.—(Received September 29.)

(No. 7.)

My Lord,

Beyrout, September 14, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Lordship's information, copies of further despatches which I have addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at the Porte upon the state of affairs in this country.

I have, &c.

(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 181c.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, September 13, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that M. Bécard, the French Commissioner, and M. Novikow, the Commissioner for Russia, have arrived at Beyrout, the former yesterday, the latter this morning. M. Weckbecker, the Austrian Consul-General and Commissioner, being here already, it is only the absence of M. de Rehues, the Representative of Prussia, that now delays the constitution of the Commission. This gentleman will arrive, I am told, in a week.

His Excellency Fuad Pasha, however, is anxious that some other person from Constantinople should appear on the part of Turkey, as he thinks that his own duties as Governor-General and Commander-in-chief will render it inconvenient for him himself to attend our meetings. I do not know what view my colleagues will take of this change of plan, but I have felt all along that the constant attendance of his Excellency at the sittings of the Commissioners would be almost impossible.

When his Excellency mentioned the subject to me, I merely observed that I thought it was a matter of great importance that Turkey should be represented by an able man, who would be capable of successfully advocating her interests, as it was expedient that any dispute which might arise should be decided within the bosom of the Commission itself, in order to avoid the appearance of any want of unanimity between himself and the Representatives of Europe.

The trial of Khorshid Pasha commenced yesterday; that of Tahir Pasha is to be shortly instituted.

Yesterday, in alluding to these pending investigations, Fuad Pasha expressed to me with apparent sincerity, his determination not to flinch from his duty, however painful it might become, coupling his remark with the observation, that he now perceived that a more opportune severity at Damascus might have prevented the landing of the French troops. At the same time I clearly gathered from certain expressions which fell from his Excellency, that he rather counted on the affairs of Italy absorbing the attention of the Great Powers to such a degree as will enable him to withdraw himself and his Government from beneath the pressure of the public opinion of Europe.

In fact, I am afraid that it is fear, and the exigencies of the occasion, rather than a sense of justice, that inspire his Excellency's policy.

In regard to the disturbances of the Lebanon, the following is Fuad Pasha's plan:—He has issued a proclamation, inviting all the Druse Chieftains to appear before him within five days, on the understanding that complete security shall be guaranteed to those who are able to clear themselves of all participation in the late atrocities. Against those who fail to appear judgment will go by default.

It is probable that the persons most compromised will decline to come. Their goods will then be declared sequestered, and their persons outlawed. So far as it goes, this step would seem sufficiently judicious. An opportunity will be given to the innocent to separate themselves from their more guilty

brethren, before the impending storm bursts upon the Mountain, and the principle will be established that it is unjust to consider the whole Druse nation as having been implicated in the late disturbances.

In regard to the ultimate arrangement which may be contemplated by the various persons interested in the settlement of the Lebanon, it would be premature to speak. At the same time, I consider it may be satisfactory to send your Excellency, by every opportunity, the indications I may obtain, however faint, of the policy likely to be suggested by the Representatives of the various Powers, as I shall then secure the advantage of being forearmed with your Excellency's observations on the various combinations which may hereafter present themselves. I would merely beg your Excellency to remember that, as yet, whatever I forward on this subject must, of course, be considered a mere matter of conjecture.

As far, then, as I have been able to judge, I think it is likely that Turkey will endeavour to maintain, in all its integrity, the present position of the Druses in the Lebanon. She will urge the fatal inconvenience to the authority of the Porte which will result from the establishment of Maronite supremacy along so important a sea-board, and will compare the influence likely to be exercised by France under such circumstances to that possessed by Russia over the population of Montenegro. It is even possible that, as far as decency permits, she will still cling to her ancient projects of subjecting the whole district to the paramount authority of a Turkish Government.

France, on the other hand, will, perhaps, content herself with proposing, as the basis of a settlement, that, in order to prevent any future collision between these two great mountain tribes, it will be best to separate them; that as it is the Druses who have put themselves in the wrong on the late occasion, it is the Druses who must move out of the mixed districts. Now, to those unacquainted with the constitution of the Mountain, this would not appear to be an unreasonable project; its execution, however, would in reality imply the total expulsion of the Druses, to the number of 50,000 or 60,000 persons, from the Lebanon to the Hauran, inasmuch as there is no portion of the Druse districts among which Christians are not interrupted.

On the other hand, I am bound to say that, in the opinion of Mr. Graham, the transference of the entire Druse population from the Lebanon to the Hauran, would be likely to prove as conducive to the prosperity of their nation as it would to the tranquillity of the Mountain.

This project, however, I will bring under your Excellency's consideration after I shall have had further opportunities of examining it.

As to the opinions likely to be entertained on these subjects by Russia, Prussia and Austria, I have had no means of forming an opinion.

With England will probably reside the opportunity, should your Excellency desire me to avail myself of it, of proposing a compromise between the extreme views likely to be advocated by France in favour of the Maronites and by Turkey on behalf of the Druses.

I have, &c.

(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 2 in No. 181c.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, September 14, 1860.

IN reference to my despatch of the 8th instant, I have the honour to inform your Excellency that Fuad Pasha has come to what he seems inclined to consider a satisfactory understanding with M. de Beaufort respecting the movements of the French troops.

In a day or two, a portion of the Turkish army is to march a short distance into the interior, under General Kmety, for the purpose of occupying Deir-el-Kamar and other positions in the mixed districts of the Lebanon. It has been

agreed that, shortly afterwards, detachments of French troops shall follow in their wake, and assist in patrolling the Mountain. By this means his Excellency hopes to preserve intact, in the eyes of the natives, the military prestige of the Turks, to invest the French army with the character of an auxiliary corps, and to afford the French General the opportunity of employing his troops, without allowing him to assume an independent line of action.

There can be no doubt but that it has been very much against his will that Fuad Pasha has been induced to allow General Beaufort to march at all from Beyrout, but it was scarcely possible for him any longer to withhold his consent. The language held, moreover, by the French General to his Excellency seems to have been very conciliatory. He stated that, on arriving in this country, he became aware that it would be his duty in some sort to sacrifice himself and his renown to disappoint public expectation in France, and to abandon all hope of acquiring glory and of reaping laurels; at the same time, it was quite out of the question that, having been sent all the way from France, he should remain totally inactive, more especially while those of whose cause he was the champion were houseless and destitute; his troops, moreover, were becoming impatient and sick; change was necessary both for their physical and moral well-being. He begged, therefore, his Excellency to make such arrangements as might allow him to have at least the appearance of doing something.

I cannot but venture to submit to you Excellency that such language as this is as creditable to the intelligence of M. de Beaufort as it is to his character. A person less capable of appreciating the situation might have failed to comprehend the true nature of his duties, any one more ready to listen to the dictates of selfishness and vulgar ambition might have wilfully shut his eyes to them; by exercising with such sound judgment and moderation the functions which have been delegated to him by Europe, M. de Beaufort will acquire a far nobler reputation than any that was to be gained by a senseless search after glory at the risk of complicating the difficulties of a situation already sufficiently embarrassing.

Of course, it is quite impossible for me to offer to your Excellency anything approaching to an opinion as to the character these military movements may eventually assume. Intelligence has reached me to-day that many of the Druse Chiefs are preparing to retire into the Hauran. Some may, probably, obey the summons of the Government, and surrender to take their trial. I can scarcely believe that any will attempt to make a stand in the Lebanon against the combined attack of the Turkish and French troops. Fuad Pasha expressed to me his hopes that the campaign would be confined to what he called "a military promenade." Whether the cordon of Arab tribes he has placed to the eastward of Mount Hermon for the purpose of intercepting the fugitive chiefs on their way to the Hauran will succeed in their endeavours is more problematical; I am not, indeed, quite prepared to say that his Excellency is very anxious that they should. Above all things, it is quite impossible to conjecture what eventualities may arise out of an endeavour on the part of the French troops to follow the Druses into their Eastern fastnesses; should it be decided that M. de Beaufort is to march in that direction. That the campaign must ultimately extend to the Hauran is hardly to be doubted.

From thence sallied forth Ismail-el-Atrash, the most merciless of the Druse depredators, and thither will retire the most compromised of the Lebanon Chieftains. That the Turks will be able to carry the district single-handed is hardly to be expected. On the other hand, if the French engage in that portion of the campaign, the operations now about to begin will certainly not be confined, as his Excellency Fuad Pasha has suggested, to "a military promenade."

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Lord Dufferin to Lord J. Russell.—(Received October 1.)

(No. 8.)

My Lord,

Beyrout, September 21, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Lordship's information, copies of two despatches, of this date, with their inclosures, which I have addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at the Porte upon the progress of affairs in this country.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 182.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, September 21, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Excellency's information, copy of a nominal list of the persons forming the tribunal appointed to try Koorshid Pasha. I have added a note indicating the religious persuasion to which each individual belongs.

Koorshid Pasha's trial is still going on.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 2 in No. 182.

Tribunal appointed to try Koorshid Pasha.

*President:—*His Excellency Ahmed Pasha, Governor-General, late Governor of Smyrna. Enjoys a certain reputation for ability and honesty of purpose.

*Members:—*1. Admiral Mustapha Pasha. Speaks English, educated at Sheerness, and has served on board English men-of-war.

2. The Mufti of the town of Beyrout, a Mussulman.

3. Abro Efendi, an Armenian Christian, an employé of Fuad Pasha.

4. Moharabji Hamid Bey, Mussulman Accountant for the province.

5. Colonel Humy Bey, alias Mr. O'Reilly, an Irishman. Has served under the late King of Sardinia and with the Hungarians.

This is a better Tribunal than the one erected at Damascus. Although not entitled, perhaps, to very much confidence, it might have been impossible to find among the subjects of the Porte the elements of a better one.

Inclosure 3 in No. 182.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, September 21, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Excellency copy of a notification which has been addressed by the Government to the Damascene Christians who have fled to Beyrout for refuge to the number of 8,000 souls, inviting them to return to their city.

Yesterday a certain number of persons began to avail themselves of the facilities which have been afforded them for the journey. Others may possibly follow; I understand, however, that the great majority intend to wait until they receive from the Commissioners of the five Powers an unanimous recommendation to return.

I am as yet unable to say what may be the views of my colleagues on this subject; I confess that I myself am decidedly of opinion that these

unfortunate persons should be encouraged to go back. Their presence in Beyrout is fraught with many evil consequences. The women and girls become demoralised; the men acquire habits of idleness and mendicancy; and above all things it is to be feared lest, when the rain comes on, fever and ague should make terrible havoc among the unsheltered multitude.

Before leaving Damascus, I inquired most anxiously of every one capable of giving an opinion, whether any danger was to be apprehended of a second outbreak. Mr. Brant, our Consul; M. Outré, the Consul of France; his Highness the Emir, Abd-el-Kader; Mr. Robson, a Protestant Missionary; Mr. Mashalla and Mr. Frej, eminent native Christians; General Kmety and others, have all assured me that as long as Fuad Pasha is in Syria I need entertain no uneasiness on that score. Indeed, it seems to me that it is impossible to act at all, except on the supposition that his Excellency is capable of maintaining order at Damascus.

If this were not a certainty, it would be our duty not only to prevent every one from returning thither, but to warn every Christian soul within its walls to escape to the coast.

When, therefore, my private opinion was asked upon the matter, I did not hesitate to give it in the above sense.

M. Beclard is unwell, but I have been informed that he takes the same view of the matter.

In reference to this subject, I have the honour to transmit to your Excellency copy of a letter, with inclosure, I have addressed to Major Fraser at Damascus.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 4 in No. 182.

Notification.

(Translation.)

UNDER the auspices of His Imperial Majesty, lodging in certain quarters of Damascus has been provided for the Christians of Damascus after that outbreak which has now been suppressed. The Christians have occupied the dwellings so provided, and now not a single individual of them remains in the castle. There are at present in Damascus from eighty to ninety empty houses fit to be inhabited by families from amongst you who will return to their native place. As Damascus is at present under the shadow of His Imperial Majesty, and in the enjoyment of tranquillity and security, it is incumbent upon you to return to it; you will find there all that you require as regards lodging and subsistence.

In order to facilitate your return, and secure your comfort on the road, we have thought proper to assign 200 animals for each caravan that shall start for Damascus. Therefore, those of you that wish to return are to subscribe their names, and the number of mules they may require, at the office of the Relief Commission, in order that upon the requisite number being attained, animals may be given them at the expense of the Government, and a sufficient escort to accompany them.

His Excellency the Vali of Damascus will be written to in order that upon their arrival he should lodge them in the residences provided, and give them their appointed rations: for your allowances, after fifteen days from this date, will be distributed to you at Damascus, and not at Beyrout.

We have, therefore, issued this notification from the office of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and of the Extraordinary Special Commission to Syria.

Dated 1st Rebi-evod, 1277.

Inclosure 5 in No. 182.

Lord Dufferin to Major Fraser.

Beyrout, September 20, 1860.

Sir,

IN consequence of the communication you have been good enough to make me respecting the annoyances to which the Christians of Damascus are still occasionally exposed, I have addressed to Abro Effendi a Memorandum, of which the accompanying paper is a copy.

I am happy to say that Abro Effendi has informed me, in reply, that his Excellency Fuad Pasha sent orders yesterday evening to Damascus, requiring the authorities to take immediate measures against the repetition of such irregularities.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 6 in No. 182.

Lord Dufferin to Abro Effendi.

Beyrout, September 19, 1860.

LORD DUFFERIN has the honour to inform Abro Effendi that he has just received intelligence from Major Fraser, at Damascus, that, since his Excellency Fuad Pasha's departure, the Christians in that city have been subjected to a certain amount of annoyance at the hands of the Moslem population.

Abro Effendi may rely on the accuracy of this information, as Major Fraser is a person by no means prone to exaggeration, and is particularly cautious in transmitting intelligence of the truth of which he is not certain.

That the Moslem population should take occasion to evince their ill-will towards their Christian citizens whenever they can do so with impunity, is, unhappily, to be expected. It might be impossible for even the most vigilant police to control every expression of animosity: at the same time, where it is so much in the interest of the Government to restore confidence and to engage the fugitive Damascenes to return to their city, it is absolutely necessary that extraordinary precautions should be taken against any exhibition of malevolence, however slight, on the part of the Moslem population; more especially as the slightest affront put by a Moslem on a Christian will be sure to give rise to a thousand exaggerations. No pains ought, therefore, to be spared in preventing the repetition of such acts as these to which Major Fraser alludes, and their commission ought to be punished with the greatest promptitude and severity.

In reply to an appeal which has been made to him for advice, Lord Dufferin has encouraged the Damascene Christians now at Beyrout to accept the invitation of the Government to return to their homes. It is, therefore, natural he should feel the greatest anxiety as to their future security, and he consequently ventures most earnestly to request that Abro Effendi would draw his Excellency's attention to this subject.

No. 183.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell. — (Received October 3.)

(No. 1,281.)

My Lord,

Paris, October 2, 1860.

I INQUIRED, this afternoon, of M. Thouvenel, whether the French Government had received any reports from the Commander of the French troops in Syria.

His Excellency said that they were in possession of nothing very new; that Fuad Pasha had requested General Beaufort to take part in an expedition having for its object the capture of some Druse Chiefs who

had not obeyed the summons sent to them to appear before him; that French and Turkish troops were to march on this service, but that it was well known that the said Chiefs had long ago made their escape.

To a further question which I put to him, M. Thouvenel replied that he had not heard of the assembling of the Commission, and that he much feared that the little alacrity shown by the Northern Powers to make it efficient would prevent its becoming of any real use.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

No. 184.

Sir H. Bulwer to Lord J. Russell.—(Received October 6.)

(No. 636.)

My Lord,

Therapia, September 26, 1860.

IN reference to my despatch No. of the instant, relative to Lord Dufferin's proceedings and visit to Damascus, I have the satisfaction of saying, that he seems to have acted with the judgment and discretion which I anticipated from him. He in no wise urged Fuad Pasha to execute Achmet Pasha if he (Fuad Pasha) did not deem that officer deserved death; but Fuad considering him guilty, and he having been regularly tried and condemned, Lord Dufferin deemed it advisable (and I quite agree with him) that his execution should take place forthwith, as the result of the deliberate judgment of an Ottoman authority, rather than at the demand of the Commission, which would otherwise have naturally made that demand.

I understand that the French Consul now deems the act in question premature; but not only was the French Ambassador always urging the execution of Achmet Pasha before his guilt had been thus regularly established, but it also seems to me clear that, having been established, the sooner the punishment followed the sentence the greater the effect likely to be produced by it.

It appears that the French are anxious to attack the Druses, with or without the Turks; and I gather from the French Ambassador he would have the leading Druses shot without trial or inquiry, which I cannot but think would be unjust. It also appears to me but reasonable to wait until Fuad and the French General can combine their movements; and that the fact of a few mulberry-trees being cut down in the vicinity of the French camp is not a sufficient reason to break one of the essential conditions of the Convention, which enjoined a concert between the French Commander and the Turkish Commissioner.

I am, however, persuaded that, though there may be some talk upon the matter, Count Beaufort is too sensible a man to undertake any rash or hazardous proceeding, that might not only compromise the safety of his army, but the engagements of his Government.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY L. BULWER.

No. 185.

Consul Brant to Lord J. Russell.—(Received October 6.)

(No. 20.)

My Lord,

Damascus, September 20, 1860.

I MUST apologise to your Lordship for having lately discontinued my reports on passing events; I have been for some days so severely indisposed that I have been unable to write.

On Saturday, the 8th instant, a short time before Fuad Pasha's departure for Beyrout, Achmet Agha, the ex-Mushir, Ali Bey, Commander of the troops in the Christian quarter of Damascus at the time of the outbreak, Osman Bey, Colonel at Hasbeya, and Mohammed Ali Bey, the

Bimbashi of Rasheya, were shot in the barrack square, the public not being admitted.

If it had not been for Lord Dufferin's arrival here, the execution of Achmet Agha might possibly have been delayed for some time further, as there did not seem much desire on the part of Fuad Pasha to hasten the execution of this man, who, had he done his duty, could easily have prevented the Damascus massacres.

I know little of what has been doing here since Fuad Pasha's departure; many fresh houses have been searched, in which plunder has been discovered, and some further arrests have been made.

All the Christians are now removed from the Castle into the houses in different Turkish quarters.

Yesterday morning at daybreak, nine persons found guilty of murder, were discovered by the inhabitants hanging in different parts of the city; among them was the murderer of the Rev. William Graham.

The Christians have by no means recovered confidence, and I understand that the general desire of the poor is to get away. They are often disturbed at night by their doors being assailed by stones, and although, when the guards are made aware of these attacks, they seize the assailants, yet the Christians experience great alarm, for it is usually where only one man or so resides among a number of women that these assaults are made.

The soldiers do not show a ready disposition to protect the Christians, and the latter seem quite afraid in the presence of a Moslem. I learn that some of these speak kindly to their Christian neighbours, and even assist them with the loan of cooking utensils and similar things; but in general, I believe, the feeling on the part of the Christian is dread or repugnance, and on the part of the Mussulman an angry sense of fancied wrong.

It will require a long period of tranquillity to restore a feeling of good neighbourhood between the sects, and indeed, in many cases, it is impossible that it can ever be re-established, especially where the losses of wives, children, and relatives have been great, and have occurred under painful circumstances.

The local authorities continue to supply a little money and bread, but the supply will not suffice when the cold and damp weather arrives; firing and warmer bedding and clothing must then be added.

Already sickness is extending, and there being no medical assistance for the sufferers, a great mortality may be anticipated. In short, the prospect of the approaching winter is sufficiently gloomy, and dearth of bread will, I fear, be added to the other causes of suffering.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JAS. BRANT.

No. 186.

Consul Brant to Lord J. Russell.—(Received October 6.)

(No. 21.)

My Lord,

Damascus, September 20, 1860.

IT would appear from what one hears from Beyrout, that an attack on the Druses is contemplated. Troops also are preparing to leave Damascus, they say two battalions and two guns for Hasbeya, whither Ismail Pasha (General Kmety) is reported to have directed his steps,—and an extra battalion to join Mustafa Pasha, in the Haurân. This is all I know at present. The Druses are themselves in great apprehension of an attack, and have been sending in Christians from the Haurân to endeavour to discover the intentions of the Turkish authorities in their regard.

The threatened outbreaks at Akka and Latakia show that the spirit of fanaticism is still as strong as ever, and that probably nothing but the occupation of Syria for a time by European troops will crush it out. It might be feared that if in one point it were to raise its head, and the local Government be too weak to put it down, a new outbreak would follow

throughout Syria, and even beyond; for I do not think the Porte has sufficient troops at its command, and sufficiently energetic officers, to suppress a general outburst of fanaticism, to which the Mussulman population everywhere seem greatly disposed.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JAS. BRANT.

No. 187.

Lord Dufferin to Lord J. Russell.—(Received October 6.)

(No. 9.)

My Lord,

Beyrout, September 23, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship a copy of a narrative I have requested Mr. Robson to draw up for your Lordship's information of the circumstances under which the massacres of Damascus have occurred.

Mr. Robson is an Irish Presbyterian Missionary. He is a person of sober judgment and great intelligence. He has been a resident at Damascus for eighteen years; he speaks Arabic perfectly; and is naturally in a position to speak with very considerable authority on everything connected with the country.

His narrative, combined with that of Mr. Graham's, a copy of which I have already had the honour of transmitting to your Lordship, will form a trustworthy and connected history of the deplorable events which have deluged this province with human blood.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure in No. 187.

Memorandum.

FROM the commencement of the war between the Christians and the Druses in Lebanon, the Christians of Damascus were in the greatest alarm, for their Moslem fellow-citizens indulged constantly in very threatening and very insulting language towards them. Whenever they went into the bazaars or streets in the Moslem quarter of the city, men and boys applied offensive and degrading epithets to them and their religion, cursed them, and often spoke of a rising against them. The repeated successes of the Druses increased the insolence of the one party and the terror of the other. The murders of the Christians in Kinakir, known in the city on the 11th of June; the massacres in Hasbeya and Rasheya; the outrages committed by the Moslems and Druses in villages in every direction in the surrounding country, and the sight of the wretched fugitives who flocked to the city for safety and food, to the number of 5,000 or 6,000, excited and emboldened the Moslems, and intensified the terrors of the Christians.

The impression began to prevail among all sects and classes that the Government itself desired and intended the destruction of the Christians. They were retained in the city only by the impossibility of escaping to any safe place. The fall of Zahleh, and the massacre in Deir-el-Kamar, added to the exultation of the Moslems, and rendered the panic of the Christians extreme and universal.

During all this time the Moslems became more assuming, insolent, and threatening; the insults heaped on the Christians more numerous, shameful, and alarming; while the Christians became more terrified, subdued, and cringing. They seemed to yield up at once all the rights and liberties which they had gained during the last twenty-seven years. They did not venture to ride any animal in the city; they ceased to resent any insult, or complain of any injury; they abstained from demanding payment of debts or enforcing claims against Moslems; they submitted in silence to impositions, and sometimes to assaults. To avoid the abuse to

which they were exposed they ceased to frequent the cafés, the walks in the gardens, and other places of public resort, and almost abandoned their shops and business in the city. Few of them hoped that the approaching feast of the Kurban Beiram would pass without an attack on their quarter; and during the four days of the feast they confined themselves almost entirely to their houses and their own quarter.

The festival began on the 29th of June. On that day troops were stationed in the Christian quarter, and gave some encouragement to them. But they knew that the Imperial troops had been present at all the massacres of their brethren in the mountains, and that some of the officers and many of the men sent to their quarter had been themselves at those of Hasbeya and Rasheya; and the more they talked of these circumstances and reflected on them, the greater became their anxiety and their distrust of the soldiers.

The Beiram passed over, and they breathed a little more freely; but as the bearing of the Moslems did not become less insolent and hostile, and as Christians and Christianity were as much insulted as before, great anxiety and terror were still felt.

However, by Monday, 9th July, as nothing serious had happened in the city, and as there had been no further massacres elsewhere, the Christians had generally persuaded themselves that the danger which had distressed and terrified them so much and so long was nearly over.

It appears that some Moslems took pains to reassure them. On the previous evening, the now infamous Mustafa Bey-el-Hawasaly called on several of the principal Christians, as Hanna Frej, Antone Shamy, and Mitry Shelhub, to persuade them that there was no longer any reason to fear, and that they might go to sleep with their doors open, and he would guarantee their perfect safety. On the 9th July, therefore, the poor Christians congratulated one another that they had escaped, and they generally returned, after a long intermission, to their usual occupations. The Government Clerks went to the Seraglio; the shopkeepers resumed their business; the tradesmen went to their work; the children were sent to school.

On that day the Pasha ordered two young Moslems to be put in irons for insulting Christians, and about 2 o'clock P.M. they were sent to sweep the streets. Immediately, as if this had been a preconcerted signal, the people in the principal bazars began to shut their shops, call on the religion of Mahommed, curse infidels, excite one another to arm and attack the Christians, and run together to the Christian quarter. Almost at the same moment the mob began to collect, arm, and run from the streets adjacent to the Christian quarter, the Shagur, a suburb on the south of the city, the Medân, a large suburb on the south-west, and a mile and a-half to two miles from the Christian quarter, and from Salehiyeh, a large suburban village two miles off. They encouraged and excited one another by calling on their religion and Prophet, by imprecations on the infidels, and by crying, "Arm, arm! kill, plunder, burn; the time of slaughter has come, the sun of slaughter has arisen!" and by similar expressions.

The women also stimulated the men by their cries and curses, and their prayers for success and victory. At first they were afraid of the troops, and avoided the places where they were stationed, but they soon found that they had nothing to fear from them. The Bashi-Bozouks of Salim Agha-el-Muhaine, Mustafa Bey-el-Hawasaly, and others, the Kurdish Irregulars under Muhammed Said Agha, and the Zaptiehs or police, were among the earliest and the most active in the work of murder and plunder. Many of the Bashi-Bozouks, as those under Hawasaly, had been specially enrolled to preserve the peace of the city during the excitement. The people of the city were gradually joined during Monday evening and Tuesday by Druses from the Medân and from Jermana, a Druse village two miles from the city, and by Moslem peasants from several of the surrounding villages. But no Druse Chief nor any regular Druse force from a distance took part in the affair.

The mob, with the exception of the Bashi-Bozouks, were very ill armed. Only a few had muskets, some had pistols, some had swords, a great number had battle-axes or daggers, but the great majority had only

clubs or sticks. Perhaps not more than one in twenty had a gun, and many of the guns were of little value.

If the Bashi-Bozouks and Zaptiehs had done their duty the insurrection would have been put down at once; if they had only abstained from interfering no great effort would have been necessary to quell the mob. As it was the troops, if they had acted with any vigour, would probably have encountered little opposition even from the Bashi-Bozouks.

The Christians made no defence. It is said that a Greek fired some shots on the mob, and that shots were fired from two houses by natives. With these exceptions no resistance was offered to the murderers. The Christians were almost without arms. A few young men had fowling-pieces, and some few had pistols, but there was perhaps not a sword or axe among them.

The Russian Consulate, in the centre of the Christian quarter, was one of the first houses attacked, plundered, and set on fire. His dragoman was killed. Two of his servants escaped by hiding in a cellar, where, though the house was burned over them, they remained four days without food or drink. Among the houses first broken into were those of the Dutch and Belgian Vice-Consul, the United States' Vice-Consul, and Mr. Frazier, an American missionary. The first of these had escaped with his family before the house was attacked. Mr. Frazier and his family had gone from the city before the outbreak. The American Vice-Consul was very severely wounded, and escaped with great difficulty. His two eldest sons were not in the house; his whole family were scattered, and it was several days before they were reunited. The houses of the richer Christians were all early assaulted; the mob being attracted by the prospect of rich plunder. Then the houses adjoining them were attacked, and so the plundering, murder, conflagration and ruin spread more and more. The Greek Church and Patriarchate afforded plunder of great value in church ornament and plate, the rich dresses of the clergy, the patriarch's plate, and the money in the treasury.

It was guarded by soldiers on the day of the outbreak till after sunset, when it was broken into, rifled and burned, and a large number of persons were murdered in it.

The course of proceeding was generally the same. The mob broke the door of the house with axes, rushed in, sought first for the men, murdered any they could find with clubs, sticks, axes, daggers, swords, and using sometimes fire-arms also. Then they plundered the house of furniture, clothes, stores of food, the materials of trades, and everything in it, searching carefully for money or valuables which might be concealed, and threatening and terrifying the women and children to make them tell where the men were, and if anything was hidden. They searched the women lest they might have ornaments or money concealed in their clothes, and they generally took away any articles of dress of any value which the women or children happened to have on. They very generally seized the young girls and the younger women in the house, and often took them off and kept them for a time. Finally the house was set on fire.

The better armed, the more respectable, and the more bold and violent of the murderers generally appropriated to themselves the more valuable articles in the house, and then left it for another. But they were followed by successive parties of the lower rabble, the unarmed, the poor, the weak, the women, and even children, and they stripped the house of all that remained. Not only the contents of the house, but doors, windows, window-shutters, and the panelling on the walls, were carried off. Even firewood, charcoal, the marble of the floors, and the timber of the roofs, were in many cases taken away. Besides what men, women, and children carried away, camels, horses, mules, and donkeys were employed to remove plunder.

At the moment of the outbreak a great number of merchants, shop-keepers, Government clerks, the clerks of the Moslem merchants, and some tradesmen, as stone-cutters and masons, were at their business in the Moslem part of the city. When the mob began to collect a part of these attempted to reach their houses, some with a feeble hope of assisting their families, and some because they knew of no other place of safety: some

succeeded in getting to their homes, and some were killed in the streets. Another part fled to the English, French, and Prussian Consulates, to the house of the Emir Abd-el-Kader, or to the houses of Moslem partners or acquaintances, often, in their terror and despair, forcing themselves into houses where they were little welcome. Others concealed themselves in the khans in which or near to which they happened to be at the moment, and they were generally conducted to the old citadel next day by the troops. Had all the men been in the Christian quarter and in their own houses, as they were during the Beiram, the slaughter of the Christians would have been greater than it was, perhaps much greater.

Of the men who were in the houses or in the Christian quarter some fled to the churches, to the Austrian Consulate, or to the houses of their richer neighbours; but none of these places afforded safety. Many hid in closets, necessaries, or cellars, or on the roofs of the houses, and they were almost all discovered and most of them murdered. A number of them went down into the wells, and though a deep and narrow well, was a difficult, unpleasant, and dangerous hiding-place, nearly all those who went down into them were saved, and were taken out after remaining three, four, or five days, without food, and enduring all the inconveniences of such a retreat. A few escaped by passing over the roofs from house to house, and hiding at last among the ruins of houses already plundered and burned. A few got out of the city, but of these the peasants afterwards killed some and compelled others to become Moslems. Every possible expedient for concealment or flight was adopted. A few disguised themselves as women, but they were generally detected. A few also took off their outer clothes, assumed the appearance of rioters, and went off carrying furniture as if they were plunderers. Some fled from one Moslem house to another by day and by night, and though many perished in doing so, a good many finally reached a place of safety. In such perplexity, terror, and danger, and amid such scenes of plunder, outrage, murder, and fire, did those saved make their escape. To the fears which every one had for himself was added anxiety about the fate of his family and friends. Of the 2,000 families of Damascenes involved in the massacre hardly one family escaped all together and reached a place of safety without being separated. Generally one member of the family did not know what had happened to the others, and days passed before the survivors all met again.

From about 2 o'clock p.m. on the 9th of July, the plundering and burning of houses, the murders, and the outrages committed on women, went on incessantly till about two hours after sunset. During most of that time several thousands of rioters were actively engaged. The most valuable part of the plunder was secured and the murders were very numerous. Most of the mob retired from the Christian quarter during the night, but many remained, and the work of destruction never entirely ceased. The fire was by that time extensively spread, and several hundred houses must have been in flames. At daylight next morning the Moslems returned to the Christian quarter in as great numbers as on the previous afternoon, and the plundering, burning, and murder went on throughout the day, diminishing, however, towards the evening, because little remained to be attacked. On this day almost all of the shops of the Christians in the principal bazaars were broken open and plundered. By sunset there was nothing left to the Christians but the stones and fragments of the timber of burning houses, and a few houses and rooms which the flames had not yet reached, and there remained no Christians in the quarter except those who were effectually concealed in the wells or amid the ruins of the houses.

On Wednesday morning a false and very improbable report was spread, that some Christians had fired from a Moslem's house on Moslems in the street, and killed two of them. The object of this report was soon evident from what followed. A mob of Moslems from Salehiyeh brought, it is said, by Sheik Abdullah-el-Haleby, under pretence of putting out the fire, commenced a new and very horrid work, in which others soon joined them. They went round the different quarters in which Christians had taken refuge, demanded that they should be given up, and either killed them as soon as they appeared in the street, and dragged their bodies to

the Christian quarter, or first conducted them alive to the ruins, and killed them there. The number massacred in this brutal and shocking way, after their property and houses were destroyed, and after that they had hoped that the bitterness of death was passed, it is impossible to ascertain with any exactness, unless the Government were to institute a *bonâ fide* and rigid investigation in the districts of the city which were the scenes of these horrible murders. But it is certain that several hundred of those who vainly hoped that they had found a refuge, perished on that day, and that very few of those in private houses escaped, except such as consented to embrace Mahometanism.

After that day, Wednesday, the 11th July, there were only a few murders, because no Christians remained within reach of the murderers. Doors, timber, and marble were carried off from the ruins, but not to any great extent. The fire continued till the beginning of the following week, when it almost ceased for want of materials, though for some ten days longer it was partially maintained by setting on fire any portions of houses which here and there remained. The houses in Damascus, and especially the poor houses, owing to the way in which they are built, do not readily burn. Accidental fires are very rare, and almost all originate in the establishments of cooks or bakers—seldom in private houses. As there was a perfect calm during the massacre, the fire would have gone out of itself without spreading far if it had not been constantly kept up by setting fire to additional houses.

The work of the plunderers was complete. Nothing to be found in the Christian quarter was left if it seemed worth carrying away. Many had concealed some of their more valuable effects under the floors or in secret recesses, closets, presses, or holes in the wall, or by throwing them into wells; most of what was thrown into wells was preserved, but almost everything else was discovered and taken away. The shops in the bazaars were plundered, but the khans were not attacked, and the property which Christians had in them was not disturbed. The Consulates of England, France, and Prussia, owing to their situation in the Moslem quarter, to their being guarded, and to other special circumstances, were not plundered. Besides these, a house in the Moslem quarter in which an Englishman lived, escaped.

About 1,500 houses were robbed; one private and unguarded house was left untouched. Some 200 houses adjacent to or among Moslem houses were plundered and greatly injured, but not burned. All the rest of the quarter, to the number of 1,200 or 1,300 houses, with all the churches, schools, convents, workshops, and khans, is now heaps of ruins. In many places, in pulling down walls and cutting down ornamental trees, there are traces of laborious efforts to destroy even what the fire spared. The lowest and perhaps the most accurate estimate of the loss of property is between 300,000 and 400,000 purses, equivalent to 1,250,000*l.* to 1,500,000*l.* To this might well be added the loss resulting from the compulsory idleness of the whole Christian population while the settlement of affairs is pending.

The number of persons murdered will never be exactly ascertained. Of hundreds, it is only known that they disappeared. The survivors are so scattered, and so occupied with other cares and anxieties, that it would be almost impossible to make an accurate list of the missing. An estimate may be made of the number of males in Damascus on the day of the insurrection, and of the probable proportion which the murdered bore to the survivors. The number of Christian males resident in the city were about 8,000 to 9,000, and of refugees from the surrounding country from 2,000 to 3,000. Thus the whole number of males would be between 10,000 and 12,000, and of this one-third may be deducted for children under fourteen years of age. Of the remaining 7,500 to 8,000, probably more than a third, or about 3,000, were murdered. This is the lowest estimate yet given, but it is perhaps within a few hundreds of the truth.

But it is difficult to speak with confidence, for there was great diversity in the fate of families and sects. The proportion of murders was greater among the members of the Greek Church than among those of any other sects, for their houses were exposed to the first attack of the

mob. Many families did not lose a member; many lost every adult male. In the house next to the Russian Consulate on the north, the father and his three sons were murdered, the women were abused, and the house was, as usual, plundered and burned. Four brothers who lived together abandoned their house before it was attacked, and were separated in the streets; the two elder were murdered, the two younger escaped. Two men lived in one house; one went down into the well and was saved, the other hid on the roof, and was killed. In another house, where four unmarried working men lived, two of them were killed, and the other two were badly wounded and left for dead. In the Protestant Church four men and several women took refuge. One of the men was disguised as a woman and escaped from the church, but was wounded in the street; the other three concealed themselves, but were discovered, and two of them were killed. Some thirty men were murdered in the house of a Greek priest. In the house of a working man, who was in Beyrout at the time, eleven of his neighbours were killed in the presence of his wife. In the premises of the Greek Church and Patriarchate there were several hundred refugees from Rasheya, and many Christians from the adjoining houses. The mob broke in after sunset of the first day of the insurrection, and the slaughter, both of citizens and strangers, was very great. There was a large number of the refugees in houses connected with the Armenian convent, and there also a great number were murdered. In the streets and houses near the house of Mustufa Bey el-Hawasaly, a great many dead bodies were left. The Franciscan monks were all killed. The Lazarists were saved by the Emir Abd-el-Kader. About thirty ministers of religion, including the Franciscan and a Protestant missionary, were killed. Of the native priests only five or six escaped.

It was not out of pity that the murderers spared the children. Had it been so they would, probably, not have butchered old feeble men as helpless as children. It is a doctrine of Mahometanism, founded on a saying of the Prophet, and held by all Sunnites, that every child is from birth a believer in Islam, the true religion, and that unbelieving parents make it, as it grows up, a Jew, or a Christian, or an idolater, as the case may be. Children, therefore, being Moslems, it is unlawful to kill them; but it was doubtless intended to take possession of them and bring them up as Moslems. Several children who have been restored to their parents were circumcised.

Unlike the Druses, who generally respected the women, the Mahometans of Damascus acted most brutally towards them. The number of young girls, and of married women and mothers, abused by them, was, perhaps, greater than that of the men murdered. A great number were taken to houses in the town, or to the villages, and even to remote villages, and were kept, some for days and some for weeks, before they were allowed to return to their families. There was great diversity in the treatment to which those taken away were subjected.

Hundreds professed Mahometanism, during the massacre, in the hope of saving their lives, but hardly any of them were spared by the mob. Many, however, of those who found a precarious refuge in the houses of Moslems, and became Mahometans to avoid being killed or delivered up to the mob, were spared. Most of these involuntary apostates were only inspired with a greater dread and abhorrence of the persecutors and their religion, and took the first opportunity of leaving Damascus to seek a place where they might venture to abjure their forced conversion.

Only a very few remain in the city and seem disposed to adhere to their new profession. In the villages of the surrounding country also a very considerable number have been forced to abjure Christianity and embrace Mahometanism.

It is manifest that the design of the rioters was to exterminate the adult male population, take possession of the women and compel them to apostatize, bring up the children as Mahometans, and destroy the Christian quarter utterly and for ever.

The mob believed that all this was sanctioned by the views of the officers of Government, the chief men of the city, and the heads of religion, and that it was permitted, if not required, by their religion. As long as

Jews and Christians submit to the Moslem authorities, and pay their taxes, they are entitled to protection for their lives, their women and children, and their property, even if they resist or rebel against their Sovereign. Recent authorities teach that a Frank, even if not submitting to the authority of the Moslem Sovereign, nor paying the taxes imposed on infidels, yet, if allowed to live peaceably among Moslems for a time, becomes thereby virtually entitled to protection; and it is unlawful and contrary to the Mahometan religion to kill him, or seize his property, or take away his wife or children. Yet, in opposition to these principles, the Mahometans of Damascus had come to believe that the Christians, by taking advantage of the privileges and liberties conceded to them during the last thirty years, had placed them in a state of disobedience and rebellion, and forfeited their right to security and protection; and that it was, therefore, lawful to kill and rob them, and carry off their women and children.

This belief that what they did was according to their law and religion, and agreeable to the wishes of their superiors, palliates, so far, the monstrous crimes of the mob, but casts a weightier responsibility and guilt on the influential teachers and guides who disseminated such ideas among the common people, and on the Government, which did nothing to correct the erroneous impressions as to its views and designs, which were so widely circulated and believed.

The Emir Abd-el-Kader did his utmost, from the commencement of the excitement, to inculcate right views; and it is said that one Sheik earnestly adopted a similar course. But it is not known that the Mufti or Sheik Abdullah-el-Haleby, the most venerated of the Ulema, or any others of that body, or of the influential people, assisted them. Rumour ascribes to them a very different course of conduct.

On the day of the outbreak, Colonel Ali Bey was in command of the troops in the Christian quarter, and actually refused to act against the mob. Another officer, Colonel Salih Ziky, without orders, made some of the troops fire on the rioters, and he also fired a gun, once or oftener. One or two persons were killed, and some wounded. When the troops fired, the mob fell back, and not the slightest symptom of resistance to the troops was shown.

This partial and feeble effort soon ceased. After sunset the troops were collected in one place, and remained till 1 or 2 o'clock on Tuesday morning, when they marched to the barracks. Not a sentinel was left in the Christian quarter. On subsequent days, a few of the troops were employed to conduct some Christians from khans and other hiding-places to the citadel.

No. 188.

Lord Dufferin to Lord J. Russell. — (Received October 6.)

(No. 10.)

My Lord,

Beyrout, September 23, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith copies of further despatches which I have addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at the Porte upon the progress of affairs in this country.

I have, &c.

(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 188.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, September 21, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that since the publication of the notice alluded to in my despatch of the 13th instant, summoning the Druse Chiefs to appear by a certain day before his Excellency Fuad Pasha to answer for their conduct, repeated applications

have been made, in an indirect manner, by Said Bey Jumblat, the most important of the Druse Magnates, to Mr. Moore and myself, urging us to afford him some assurance of safety, should he surrender to take his trial.

To all applications of this nature Mr. Moore and myself have agreed to give an absolute refusal.

We have felt that the only assurance we could give would be, that justice should be done, and that his safety must depend upon his innocence.

It is probable, however, that if a message of this description were sent to him, he would misinterpret it into a cautious intimation that he might count upon English influence to secure his acquittal.

Before the fall of Zahleh, Mr. Moore enjoined Said Bey, on behalf of the English Government, to interfere, and to prevent the effusion of more Christian blood. There is little doubt but that, had he chosen, he might have prevented the catastrophe. He turned a deaf ear to all remonstrances, and the place was lost.

Under these circumstances, Mr. Moore and myself have agreed to refuse to have any communications with him whatever, and to leave it to his own discretion whether to surrender or to fly.

I have, &c.

(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 2 in No. 188.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, September 23, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that yesterday twelve Druse Chiefs came in from the mountains. I beg to subjoin a list of their names:—

The Emir Mohammed Raslan, Kaimakam of the Druses; Emir Mulhim Raslan; Selim Bek Jumblat; Sheikh Asad Amad; Kasim Bek Abu Noked; Sheikh Hosein Talhuk; Yusef Abd el Melek; Faur Abd el Melek; Kasam Hasan ed Din; Othman Bek Abu Elwin; Sheikh Temal ed din Hamdan.

This morning I was paying a visit to Fuad Pasha in his tent, when a person came and whispered something in his ear. His Excellency turned round, and informed me that Said Bey Jumblat was waiting outside to learn his pleasure.

The other Druse Chiefs, since their arrival, have been merely kept under a kind of surveillance.

His Excellency intimated to me that now he intended to summon them before the Council, at which he himself would preside, and that probably it would be decided to secure their persons.

This I am informed has been subsequently done, and all those I have mentioned are now under confinement in the Serail.

I have not been able to ascertain before what tribunal the accused are to be arraigned, nor am I aware whether the European Commissioners will be in a position to secure their respective cases an impartial investigation.

The contemplation of the circumstances under which those accused of complicity in the late disturbances—whether at Damascus or in the Lebanon—are tried, gives rise to many painful reflections. It seems impossible to constitute a tribunal, composed of subjects of the Porte, capable of inspiring with confidence either the accuser or accused.

When those designated for trial by public opinion are declared guilty, the disagreeable conviction forces itself upon one, that though the verdict may be just, its relation to the crime is almost accidental. The Turkish authorities are aware that Europe requires satisfaction for what has occurred, that a certain amount of punishment must take place, and that the reputation of the Porte must be cleansed in the blood of the guilty.

The tribunal acts under pressure: the defendant considers himself a victim surrendered to a political exigency; the plaintiff feels that it is rather a politic propitiation that has been made than that the ends of justice have been satisfied.

The better nature of every one revolts against such blundering jurisprudence.

In the case of the Druse Chiefs it is particularly necessary that those who judge them should be persons who have not only the will to decide impartially, but the intelligence to discriminate sagaciously.

The number of lies which will be ratified by the most solemn oaths will probably be enormous, the mass of conflicting testimony considerable, the distinctions to be drawn extremely subtle. I hardly think a native tribunal will have either the patience, the conscientiousness, or the freedom of opinion necessary to deal with the cases brought before them.

I do not know whether the Commission will consider itself empowered to interfere. It would, however, be fortunate if its wisdom could discover a remedy for this crying evil.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 3 in No. 188.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, September 23, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that during the past week I have had several interviews with his Excellency Fuad Pasha.

During the course of our conversation his Excellency has been good enough to favour me with a somewhat detailed exposition of the plan he proposes to follow in dealing with the Druses of Mount Lebanon; and more than once his Excellency has condescended to ask my private opinion on various points connected with it.

As I had the honour to inform your Excellency in my despatch of the 13th instant, Fuad Pasha has already commenced operations by issuing a Proclamation, summoning the Druse Chiefs to appear before him under pain of judgment going against them by default should they refuse to come.

As soon as the given days of grace shall have expired, his Excellency will issue a Decree, copy of which I have the honour to inclose, attainting the persons, forfeiting the honours, titles, offices, and sequestering the entire property of all the Chiefs, whose disobedience to his requisition will have been considered presumptive evidence of their guilt.

His Excellency will then give orders for the military occupation of the Lebanon by 5,000 troops under General Kmety, Sayda having been selected as the base of his operations.

A corresponding movement will be made by a portion of the Damascus army, who will take up a position in the neighbourhood of Hasbeya and Rasheya, under the western slopes of Mount Hermon, while the Arab tribes I have mentioned in the despatch already alluded to, will lay along the frontiers of the Hauran, for the purpose of intercepting the fugitives who may attempt to escape towards the Ledjah.

In the execution of this plan, the consideration which appeared most to embarrass Fuad Pasha seemed to be that which had reference to the part in these transactions which was to be assigned to the French army. His Excellency evidently laboured under considerable apprehension of the consequences which might result from the zeal of M. de Beaufort and the thirst of a French army for military distinction. He stated that in the first place he did not apprehend any opposition would be offered on the part of the Druses: that he felt himself capable of becoming master of the situation without any aid whatever, in which opinion he is confirmed by General Kmety; that above all things he wished to give to his progress through the country the character of a judicial investigation rather than that of a General invading an enemy's country. Instead, however, of

being likely to promote these objects, the presence of a French force would tend to embarrass his movements, compromise his own authority, provoke opposition, rekindle the flame of war, and unnecessarily reduce him to the barbarous expedient of inflicting an indiscriminate chastisement on a whole nation, whose guilt, however atrocious, was by no means shared in an equal degree by each individual member of it.

In conclusion, his Excellency stated that, in order to escape from so painful a necessity, he had determined upon proposing to M. de Beaufort that, instead of acting in concert with him in the mountain against the Druses, the General should station his troops along the first twenty miles of the road out of Beyrout. Before, however, making his proposal to the General he was anxious to ascertain what my opinion might be in regard to it, and, above all things, whether in the event of the French General persisting to act independently of his orders, I should be prepared on the part of Great Britain to enter a protest against his disobedience.

In reply I stated to his Excellency that I had been especially instructed by my Government that no official relations subsisted between the Commission and the French General; still less, therefore, between any individual member of it and that officer. That, therefore, any interference upon my part was out of the question; that officially I was no more aware of the presence of M. de Beaufort and his army in Syria than I was of any corps of Albanians or Egyptians who might be serving under his Excellency's orders; that his Excellency, I understood, had been entrusted by His Majesty the Sultan with the exercise of the supreme executive authority in Syria; that, therefore, it seemed to me clear it was competent for his Excellency to make whatever arrangements respecting the employment of the French force sent to his assistance he might consider most likely to conduce to the dignity of his Sovereign and the interests of his subjects. That, according to the terms of the Convention, M. de Beaufort was directed to act in concert with him, and that, therefore, the responsibility of directing or controlling that officer's movements resided exclusively with himself. Not content, however, with this reply, his Excellency was pleased to press for my private opinion on the general situation of affairs, and appealed to me for an answer as to a personal friend.

With considerable diffidence I proceeded to state to his Excellency that in respect to the proposal he had submitted to the General I did not think it probable it would be accepted; that, although it might be well to make the experiment, I feared M. de Beaufort would receive it with extreme disfavour; that he might even allege that it placed him in a ridiculous position, and that he would, probably, state that he preferred remaining in Beyrout. That should his Excellency persist in forcing it upon him a rupture might ensue, the consequences of which might be very disastrous to himself and his Government; that his Excellency had not yet sufficiently succeeded in acquiring the confidence of Europe to risk a quarrel on such doubtful grounds; that the refugee Christians would be instructed to decline returning to their homes, except under the guardianship of a French force; that M. de Beaufort would seize the pretext to commence an independent movement, and that the initiative to be thus taken out of his hands would render his position every day more intolerable.

On the other hand, I admitted there was but a choice of evils; that the situation was a very delicate one, requiring great skill, judgment, and determination. That it was certainly to be expected that M. de Beaufort, notwithstanding the moderation of his professions, would desire, if possible, to give what his Excellency wished to invest with the air of a judicial proceeding, carried on under the protection of an army doing the duty of police, the character of a military campaign; that an accidental rencontre between the French troops and the Druses might establish a blood feud and render it necessary to carry with fire and sword a country which otherwise might have been peaceably occupied; and that once engaged in such a contest the French General would be apt to plead his professional responsibility and strategical exigencies as a pretext for withdrawing himself entirely from under his Excellency's control. That I entirely agreed with his Excellency in thinking it advisable that, if possible, his progress through the Druse country should have the character of a Judge

holding an assize, rather than of a conqueror claiming vengeance; that, after all, it was to be remembered that, however atrocious might have been the massacres committed by the Druses, all were not equally culpable; that in slaying unarmed men they were but acting in accordance with a barbarous custom, uninterruptedly practised throughout the country since the time of Moses, and often indulged in by the Christians whenever an opportunity occurred. That in consequence of the feudal system under which they lived the followers of the Chiefs were scarcely responsible for the excesses they committed at the instigation of their masters; that in punishing the authors of the massacres a distinction ought to be drawn between the principal and his instruments; that while the offences of the one could not be visited with too great severity the requirements of justice might be satisfied by a more lenient sentence on the great bulk of the nation.

With a view to secure these objects, and to obviate all undesirable contingencies, I ventured to urge his Excellency, in case M. de Beaufort should refuse compliance with his proposal, to lose no time in at once occupying the most important passes of the Lebanon, in taking possession of the forfeited residences of the Chiefs, and in establishing himself in the heart of the Druse districts, in order to prove to ocular demonstration his perfect independence of foreign aid. His Excellency and his troops once firmly established, the Christians might be invited to follow. In the certain event of their refusal to come, except under the shadow of an European flag, M. de Beaufort might be requested to assist in re-conducting them and establishing them in their homes.

If all this could happily be effected without opposition, if a collision could be prevented between the Druses and the French soldiers, M. de Beaufort would have no excuse for acting as if he were in an enemy's country, and the great danger of admitting his co operation would be obviated.

The difficulty would then be how to occupy the attention of his disappointed soldiery. To effect this, I ventured to suggest that, if Fuad Pasha made his own troops give the example, it might not be impossible to engage the French General to allow his men to assist the Maronites to rebuild their ruined homes, which without such assistance could never be covered in before the winter time, the Porte undertaking to remunerate their labour. Such an occupation would not be uncongenial to Frenchmen, and any occupation for his men in the absence of a foe is a godsend to a General.

Weeks would roll on, the process of the settlement of the country would be gradually gone on with, the Commission would be devising securities for its future tranquillity, and his Excellency would have time by the vigour of his acts to insure the submission of the whole province, and to convince Europe that, when properly exercised, the authority of the Sultan could be successfully asserted without the intervention of foreign aid.

In adopting this plan, however, it was desirable his Excellency should clearly determine beforehand the limits beyond which he thought it inexpedient the movement of the French army should extend; these limits once attained, for no consideration ought they to be transgressed. Having conceded to General de Beaufort as great a latitude of action as it was possible to concede consistently with the interests of the Porte, he was in a position to exercise, in the most absolute manner, the supreme control with which he was invested, and any want of firmness in this respect might amount to a great dereliction of duty. Should he assert, however, in a becoming manner, his authority, it was not likely M. de Beaufort would venture to dispute it, or run the risk of putting himself so completely in the wrong. At all events, if a rupture should occur, an event most earnestly to be deprecated, it would be under circumstances more likely to engage on the side of his Excellency the sympathies of Europe, than if it had arisen from a suspicious attempt to sequester the French General and his army within the walls of Beyrout. At the same time, his Excellency must always remember that the independence of his position entirely depended on the success and rapidity of his military movements, on the

impartiality with which he administered justice, on the wisdom of his dispositions, and, in fact, on his pursuing such a course as would convince the Governments of Europe he was sincere in his desire to adopt the policy they approve, and sufficiently powerful to carry it into execution.

In conclusion, I ventured to warn his Excellency of one very great danger which I foresaw might arise. Every day it was becoming more probable that the French were desirous of putting the Maronites into sole possession of the Mountain. In the accomplishment of this object, the sword of the soldier might become a useful ally to the pen of the diplomatist. Weeks before the Commission might have entered upon the consideration of that part of the question, M. de Beaufort, unless kept very tightly in hand, might have purposely brought about a collision between the soldiers and the Druses, and alleging some trifling insult offered to his flag, might have driven the whole nation headlong out of the Lebanon. Their expulsion would then have become a *fait accompli*, and the surrender of their territory to the Maronites a more plausible solution of the difficulty than ever.

Whether or no such an arrangement may eventually prove acceptable to the five Powers, it certainly was not one so evidently in the interest of Turkey as that it should be decided in so impromptu a manner, and it therefore seemed to me a danger against which his Excellency should guard.

Such is the substance of the communications which have passed between Fuad Pasha and myself during the last few days. I do not know whether the views I have ventured to submit to his consideration will meet with your Excellency's approbation. It was only at Fuad Pasha's earnest solicitation that I took upon myself to hazard them. In placing them before him I made him clearly understand that I had received no authority whatever from my Government to hold such language; that your Excellency might very possibly take quite a different view of the situation; that he must consider my opinions as merely emanating from a private individual, whose expressions were dictated simply by sentiments of personal regard for himself, and a most earnest desire for the regeneration of the Turkish Empire. At the same time, should I have been fortunate enough to have proffered advice in any degree resembling that which your Excellency and Her Majesty's Government should wish to have been given, I think that it might be desirable I should have an opportunity of acquainting his Excellency with a fact the knowledge of which would at once invest it with a force and consequence of which of course at present it is quite destitute.

In conclusion I beg to assure your Excellency that in forming an opinion as to the share to be assigned to the French army in the military occupation of the Lebanon, I have not allowed myself to be at all influenced by any feeling of international jealousy. Had the European contingent been British I should have equally recommended that it should be kept in the background. When the European Powers agreed to the intervention of a foreign force it was still uncertain whether a Turkish army could be depended upon for the restoration of the Sultan's authority, or whether the Turkish Government was prepared to visit with due severity the crimes of those who have deluged this province with blood. Subsequent events have proved that the Sultan's troops may be safely used as an engine for subduing opposition, and there is reason to hope that the Sultan's Representative has convinced himself of the necessity of affording Europe the satisfaction she demands.

With a view to the future tranquillity of the country it is certainly expedient to uphold in the eyes of its Syrian subjects the prestige of the Porte; to convince them that the punishments descending upon them are inflicted by a Government from within the range of whose observation they cannot withdraw, and by a hand they are capable of identifying, rather than in consequence of the presence of a foreign force, which to their imperfect ideas would seem to be the representative of a mere evanescent authority. One other important consideration may be alleged in support of this view. If the Turkish Empire is to endure it is necessary to restore the confidence of the Christians in the troops of the Sultan.

This confidence has been destroyed by the prominent part taken in the late massacres by the Turkish soldiery at the instigation of their chiefs. At the same time that the Government is attempting to disavow all connivance in the guilt of its subordinates, it is desirable that the army should endeavour to prove itself to have been but an irresponsible instrument in their hands. Though perhaps not very likely to insure the restoration of confidence in its sincerity, some progress might be made towards it by the Turkish army leading the way in re-conducting the victims of the late outrages to their homes.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 4 in No. 188.

Notification.

CONFORMEMENT à la volonté de Sa Majesté le Sultan la justice devant être exercée par un jugement impartial à l'égard de ceux qui ont trempé dans les événements regrettables qui ont eu lieu dernièrement dans le Mont Liban, une sommation générale a été adressée à tous les Chefs des Druses et Chrétiens de la Montagne afin qu'une enquête fût exercée et un jugement fût porté sur la source et les circonstances particulières qui ont amené cette guerre civile. Par cette sommation il a été déclaré que ceux qui ne feraient pas acte de présence à Beyrouth dans le délai fixé seraient considérés comme ayant avoué et reconnu leur propre culpabilité, et qu'en conséquence ils seraient passibles des peines prévues par la loi.

Plusieurs Chefs Druses ne se sont pas rendus à cet appel. Or, quelques uns d'entre eux sont accusés d'être auteurs ou provocateurs de soulèvements, quelques autres comme étant coupables de crimes et délits civils, et la plupart de ces Sheiks se sont déclarés accusés par devant l'autorité Impériale et le droit civil comme auteurs et provocateurs de soulèvements, et coupables de crimes et délits civils, que comme ayant méconnu tous les devoirs que leur imposait leur qualité de Mokataji chargés de maintenir la tranquillité publique.

Tous ceux qui dans les Etats du Sultan excitent une population contre l'autre et provoquent des meurtres, ainsi que ceux qui y participent par des crimes ou délits civils, étant passibles des peines portées dans le Code Pénal, et les Chefs Druses ci-dessus mentionnés s'étant constitués coupables d'eux-mêmes par leur refus de se rendre à l'appel qui leur a été fait, la Mission Plénipotentiaire et Extraordinaire chargée de pacifier la Syrie arrête ce qui suit :—

1. Les grades et les titres des Chefs susdits sont abolis.
2. Leur charge de Mokataji et les autres fonctions officielles qu'ils occupent sont éliminées.
3. Tous leurs biens, meubles et immeubles, sont séquestrés par l'Etat jusqu'à ce qu'il en soit disposé plus tard conformément aux ordres de Sa Majesté le Sultan.
4. Le degré de culpabilité des accusés et la peine dont ils sont passibles seront établis et arrêtés par le Tribunal Extraordinaire déjà institué à Beyrouth, qui instruira le procès de ces individus et les condamnera par contumace. L'exécution des sentences ainsi prononcées aura lieu au fur et à mesure que les condamnés tomberont entre les mains de la justice ; il est cependant réservé aux condamnés le droit de venir en personne se justifier devant ce tribunal.
5. Ceux qui ne sont accusés d'aucun crime ou délit civil ont leur vie et leurs biens garantis, et ceux qui auront protégé des Chrétiens lors des événements seront dûment récompensés.
6. La Kaimakamie Druse est provisoirement divisée en quatre cercles. Chacun de ces cercles est confié à un Commandant de troupes suffisant à établir les réfugiés Chrétiens dans leurs foyers, à maintenir leur sécurité, et à administrer en général le territoire de cette Kaimakamie.

Inclosure 5 in No. 188.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrouth, September 24, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to inform you that, during the course of a visit I had the pleasure of paying this afternoon to the French General, M. de Beaufort, that officer was good enough to enter, with some detail, into his future intentions.

In accordance with the plan indicated in my last despatch dated the 14th instant, his Excellency Fuad Pasha and General Kmety sail to-night for Sayda, at which place a certain number of Turkish troops are already concentrated. The expedition will then march, with the greatest dispatch, into the interior.

A few days later, M. de Beaufort tells me, a concerted movement will be made by a column of 3,000 French troops in the direction of Deir-el-Kamar.

The Christian refugees will be invited to return to their homes, and the pacification of the Lebanon will be commenced.

In reply to this information, I permitted myself to congratulate M. de Beaufort on this prospect of exchanging the disagreeable neighbourhood of Beyrouth for the healthy atmosphere of the Mountain, which could not fail to be beneficial to his troops.

The General then began to speak with considerable bitterness of the original proposal of Fuad Pasha to fetter him to the Beyrouth-road, informing me that when the paper containing the proposition was handed to him, he tore it in two in the face of the gentleman who brought it. Such a position, he added, would have made me the laughing-stock of Europe. "Had Fuad Pasha persisted in forcing it upon me, I should have commenced the campaign on my own responsibility. The instructions I have received from my Emperor authorize me to take the matter in my own hands whenever the honour of my flag is engaged : " a very ambiguous expression.

M. de Beaufort then proceeded again to enlarge, as he had already done, in a conversation the substance of which I have already transmitted to your Excellency in my despatch of the 8th instant, on his moderation, and his desire to sacrifice his own reputation and the zeal of his troops to the exigencies of the situation.

I ventured to observe, in return, that such sentiments did him the greatest credit; that I quite understood how irksome he must find his position; that I sympathised with his disappointment; and that, in regard to his army, he need not fear I should share the feeling of jealousy in regard to his army which he had stated to exist among the English residents at Beyrouth; that I looked upon him as representing the military presence of Great Britain quite as much as that of France; and that, if ever my opinions were required respecting any matters connected with the French force, I should give the same reply as I should have done had it been a British contingent under a British General.

I then proceeded to state that I had heard from Fuad Pasha it was his intention to give to his progress in the Mountains a judicial rather than a military character; that I hoped such an intention met with the General's approbation, and that he did not intend to fall headlong, with fire and sword, upon an unresisting population.

"No," replied the General, "of course not; let us punish 'les grands coupables:' for the mass of the people, 'indemnité.' At the same time, perhaps, it may be necessary to make, here and there, not an attack, but a 'poussé.'"

This last expression, I feared, seemed pregnant with a very sinister meaning. I contented myself at the time with replying that I hoped not; and took my leave.

It has occurred to me, however, that I might take advantage of the friendly relations which, I am happy to say, exist between M. de Beaufort and myself, to write him a private letter before he starts for the Mountain, alluding to the deplorable consequences which might result should the

enthusiasm of his soldiers lead him into creating a war which a true appreciation of justice rather deprecates than requires.

In conclusion, I may observe that, had Fuad Pasha persisted in relegating the French army to the Beyrout road, it is certain M. de Beaufort would have put his threat into execution. I am equally persuaded, however, that, even had it been advisable to encourage Fuad Pasha to hold out, his extreme dread of the French would have induced him ultimately to give way.

I have the honour to transmit to your Excellency copy of a Notification issued by his Excellency Fuad Pasha, for the purpose of inducing the uncompromised Druse natives to remain in their villages. I hear that the whole nation is struck with terror. The execution of Achmet Pasha and his field-officers has had, I believe, a greater effect in the Mountain than even at Damascus, where the Syrian population naturally looks with indifference on the misfortunes of their Turkish masters.

A report has arrived, this evening, that 200 Druses have been already killed in endeavouring to force a passage through the line of Turkish troops stationed to intercept their retreat to the Hauran.

I have, &c.

(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

P.S.—I take advantage of a delay in the post to transmit to your Excellency copy of the private and confidential letter above alluded to, which I have since addressed to M. de Beaufort.

D. AND C.

Inclosure 6 in No. 188.

Notification.

(Translation.)

IT has been understood that a portion of the Druses inhabiting the villages have given way to terror, in the apprehension that they were about to meet with punishment on the part of the authorities, without exception or distinction, and are therefore thinking of leaving their homes and dispersing. It is true that, in consequence of the late painful events which have occurred in Mount Lebanon, punishment will be inflicted on those who caused these disturbances, and are accused of personal participation in crime; and that these will be punished, after trial, in proportion to the magnitude of their crimes, according to justice: but this circumstance should not compel all the inhabitants to quit their homes, as nothing will happen to a single individual in contravention to justice and equity; and those who conducted themselves well during the disturbances, and protected the Christians, who are their fellow-countrymen, and served the Government and the cause of humanity, will be duly rewarded. Therefore they should occupy themselves with their business and avocations, relying on the justice of the Imperial Government.

We have consequently issued this Notification from the office of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and of the Special Extraordinary Commission for the Affairs of Syria, in order that all may know that which precedes.

Dated this 3rd Rebe-evod, 1277.

Inclosure 7 in No. 188.

Lord Dufferin to General Beaufort.

My dear General,

Beyrout, September 24, 1860.

I HEAR you are going to start for the Mountain this evening, and as I may not have the pleasure of waiting upon you before you go, perhaps I may be permitted to submit to your consideration a few words relative to the conversation I had the pleasure of having with you yesterday. In doing so I feel that my only excuse for venturing to address you

at all, is your extreme goodness in talking to me with such frankness on your future plans.

As I have already had the honour of telling you, the news of your approaching movement on Deir-el-Kamar gave me the very greatest satisfaction. It seemed to me to be most expedient that the army which represents, as you yourself most justly observe, the military aid supplied by Europe to the Sultan at this important crisis, should assist in reconducting to their homes the victims of the late outrages. It is possible that they would have even hesitated to return except beneath the guardianship of your flag. To encourage their confidence; to provide for their security; to superintend the work of reparation which is, I trust, about to be inaugurated by the Porte, though, perhaps, less pregnant with renown than a brilliant feat of arms, will at all events be in harmony with the traditions of chivalrous beneficence by which France has from early ages illustrated her connection with this country.

You know, moreover, that I am quite free from what I shall venture to call the childish distrust which I believe may occasionally be found to exist among some of my countrymen in regard to the permanent occupation of Syria by your army. I am well aware of the assurances given by His Majesty the Emperor to my Government on this head, and I will not affront you by repeating that I place the most perfect confidence in them.

But even supposing we had never received the Emperor's word, a moment's reflection must convince any one that it is at Paris or London that the question, if it ever should arise, must eventually be settled, and that the presence of 6,000 or 7,000 troops of either nation in this country cannot materially affect the result.

In considering, therefore, any plan relative to the distribution of the force under your command, I have made and shall make it a matter of conscience to forget that it is not a British army under a British General.

When, therefore, his Excellency Fuad Pasha announced to me that he had requested you to take part with him in his progress through the Lebanon, I expressed my most unfeigned satisfaction, and this satisfaction has been only confirmed by what passed between us yesterday. I have already acquainted my Government with the justice and moderation of your views, and assured them there was no danger that any mis-timed desire for distinction, or any temptation to satisfy the popular expectation in France, would induce you to complicate by any violence the difficulties which already sufficiently embarrass us.

When I informed you that Fuad Pasha had confided to me his desire to give to his circuit through the Mountain the character of a judicial investigation, and that I had approved of his intention, it gave me the greatest pleasure to find that you were also of opinion that provided the Chiefs and instigators of the late atrocities were punished with due severity, it would not be advisable to visit the bulk of the people with fire and sword. The more I have reflected on this principle, the more I am convinced of its justice.

The Druses live under a kind of feudal system; the tenants are the slaves of their Chiefs, irresponsible instruments in their hands. For ages the custom has prevailed in the Mountain to carry on war with circumstances of atrocity unknown to civilized nations. The practice has been indulged in by Christians as well as by Druses; what occurred at Zahleh and Deir-el-Kamar differs in degree rather than in kind from what has often occurred before, when the Maronites were the victors. Such an excuse I admit, however, assumes almost invisible proportions when offered in relation to massacres on the scale of those which have been lately perpetrated, more especially when preferred on behalf of the Chiefs who instigated, or of the leaders who superintended them; but as regard the mass of the population it must be admitted to be valid.

Under these circumstances, it seems to me that it might be a deplorable event should any accidental collision between the troops under your command and the Druses lead to the establishment of what is called in this country "vendettas," a blood-feud. War, if it can be called war

would be the result, and a slaughter of the Druse population, which must be indiscriminate. Should accident make any distinction, it would perhaps be in favour of the higher classes, who would have better opportunities of providing for their safety.

I would venture, therefore, most earnestly to hope that neither the enthusiasm of your troops nor the just indignation of their officers may lead to any events which may counteract your own moderate and humane intentions, by giving to Fuad Pasha's progress through the Mountain the character of a conqueror dealing vengeance rather than that of the Sultan's representative distributing impartial justice.

In making these remarks it is not necessary I should disclaim the undue partiality to the Druses which is sometimes attributed to my countrymen. I should disdain to be the apologist of cold-blooded murderers. Moreover, you are already aware of my sentiments in this respect. I am as anxious as any one to see such punishment inflicted as shall for ever prevent the recurrence of similar calamities. I think that the whole nation should be made sensible of the detestation in which such crimes are held by Europe. But I cannot but think that to effect this object it will be better to delegate so terrible and responsible a duty to the sword of justice rather than to the bayonets of the soldiery, to invest our vengeance with the awful character of a discriminating retribution rather than that of a passionate reprisal, which if carried too far may acquire some resemblance to the crimes we seek to chastise.

In conclusion I must beg you ten thousand pardons for thus trespassing on your attention. It is your own kindness in so frankly exposing to me your sentiments which must plead my excuse. If I seem to show an undue solicitude in this matter you must attribute it to the fact that having taken upon myself the responsibility of openly applauding the announcement of the march of a French force into the Lebanon, I am naturally anxious to guard against the only unhappy consequence which may result from its interference.

Under any circumstances I trust you will consider this as merely a private and confidential communication, possessing no more force or value than that which may be claimed for it in right of the greater or less justice of the observations which it contains.

Wishing you every success in the discharge of your mission of justice and humanity, believe me, &c.

(Signed)

DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

No. 189.

Major Fraser to Lord J. Russell.—(Received October 6)

(No. 8.)

My Lord,

Damascus, September 21, 1860.

HER Majesty's Commissioner, Lord Dufferin, having been present at Damascus during the execution of Achmet Pasha and the three field officers inculpated at Hasbeya, Rasheya, and Damascus, I did not make a report on that occasion in deference to his Lordship's expressed intention of doing so. The effect of these executions on the public mind, however, was not at once perceptible. I regret to state that this now appears to have been very slight indeed, a result which I principally attribute to their having taken place in an inclosed yard, and, so far as regarded the inhabitants, in a manner entirely private.

On the 21st August, the day following the first executions, I had personally represented to his Excellency Fuad Pasha the necessity for greater publicity on all future occasions, with a view of producing the most serious impression possible on the population: a representation which I had the honour to bring under your Lordship's notice in my report of the 23rd August. This course, which seemed so imperatively demanded by the exceptional nature of the case, has not however been adopted, and the evil effects of a contrary one are now to be found in the tales current among some Moslems, to the effect that Achmet Pasha was not really

shot on that occasion, but, after a certain pantomime, accompanied Fuad Pasha's party the same night to Beyrout; tales which, however incredible in themselves, yet indicate the doubt left in the minds of some by such a mode of proceeding, and the consequent failure, as regards those individuals at least, of the effect intended to be produced.

Since the departure of Fuad Pasha for Beyrout on the 8th instant there has been little show of vigour on the part of the local authorities. Within the last five days, however, renewed action is visible, and 500 conscripts with a few convicts have been forwarded to Constantinople. During the last two days 200 additional conscripts have been levied, making in all nearly 2,000 taken up to the present time. Exemption has been granted to those who choose to pay 20,000 piastres (180*l.* sterling) per man, and about forty are said to have taken advantage of this privilege; additional men being taken in their room. The system is one liable to much abuse in the hands of unscrupulous employés.

On the 18th instant nine persons were hanged, criminals long since condemned as murderers, but for some unexplained reason reserved until now. They were all of the lower class, and may be designated as follows:—three Druses, two Koords, two Cavasses (Janissaries) of the Prussian Consulate, one man from Hamah, and a barber of Damascus, the latter stating that he was the murderer of the Rev. William Graham, a Protestant Missionary of Damascus. This statement requires confirmation; however, as it was only made after condemnation for other crimes; and there is reason to suspect that the confession was intended to screen the supposed murderer, for whom search is now being made. Of these nine culprits only five belonged to the city itself, so that, together with about forty of the fifty-six hanged on the 20th August, not above fifty of the ordinary inhabitants of the city have yet been executed for murder. The others condemned belonged either to the police force or irregular troops, and with very few exceptions were executed not for murder but for pillage, with arms in hand. Yet in a quarter of the city, where some 500 persons are calculated to have been engaged in the massacre, only about ten have yet been executed. The Christians insist there ought to be no difficulty in discovering the guilty if the Chiefs of the quarters (Mukhtars) be made to do their duty.

No judgment has yet been passed against the persons of position arrested a month ago, and described in my despatch No. 5, on the plea of want of sufficient evidence; indeed, the great body of criminals, both high and low, appears hitherto to have escaped punishment, nor can I learn that any adequate steps are being taken to discover or secure them. The criminal processes, slow during Fuad Pasha's presence here, seem as if about to cease entirely now. The necessity for a stern and signal lesson is nearly as great as ever, in consequence of the dilatory and inefficient mode in which the investigations and executions have hitherto been conducted; and I feel constrained to say that I have no hope of effectual steps being taken for the prompt administration of justice, and the consequent re-establishment of confidence and security, until some influential European element be added, directly or indirectly, to the Ottoman Commission hitherto charged with these duties.

The remaining Christians, under 5,000 in number, have now entirely evacuated the Castle, and are sheltered in the empty houses provided for them by the Government. I have within the last three days visited a large proportion of them, and regret to say that their condition is far from being what could be desired. Disease, chiefly fever and ague, prevails extensively. Steps are being taken to provide for their most pressing wants from the funds placed at Mr. Brant's disposal by the Syrian Relief Committee; but they are yet panic-stricken, and inclined to despair. They say those around them have only too cruelly proved their intense hatred and treachery, and they fear a renewal of such acts should war or any similar disturbing influence arise. They are now alarmed by the movement of troops from the city, although an ample garrison (5,000 men) yet remains, and desire to get away, without caring where. In their simple and affecting language they add, "Our hearts are burned up; we are strangers in the place of our birth; why should we stay? Let us go."

I have visited them personally, encouraging and assuring them of safety, but have not yet succeeded in restoring their confidence; this can only be effected by time, and by vigorous retributive and protective measures on the part of the Local Government.

Military dispositions preparatory to operations against the Druses, should such prove necessary, are now being made. About 2,000 men, including Irregulars, have been sent into the Hauran, and 3,000 Regulars, with 300 Koordish Cavalry and two guns, are leaving the city to-day for Hasbeya, accompanied by the Seraskier Helim Pasha. My original intention had been to join the force in the field, particularly if accompanied by his Excellency Fuad Pasha; but in view of the probable absence of Mr. Brant from Damascus, I propose to consult with Lord Dufferin before quitting my present station.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. J. FRASER.

No. 190.

Lord J. Russell to Lord Dufferin.

(No. 13.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, October 8, 1860.

I HAVE received your Lordship's despatch No. 7 of the 14th ultimo, and I have to acquaint you that Her Majesty's Government approve of the Reports upon the affairs of Syria, Nos. 8 and 9, which you addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople on the 13th and 14th of September.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 191.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received October 10.)

(No. 1,305.)

My Lord,

Paris, October 8, 1860.

I HAVE again inquired of M. Thouvenel whether it is thought that any reinforcements will be required in Syria. His Excellency replied that nothing had come from General Beaufort which would lead him to expect that a demand of the kind would be made. Much, he thought, would depend on the success of the expedition into the Lebanon. Of course if it met with serious resistance, reinforcements of the French troops would become necessary.

M. Thouvenel, however, said that General Beaufort had asked that his force should be kept up to its full effective strength, and that the sick, of which there were many, should be replaced. Under this excuse, the French force might be augmented very considerably without attracting notice; and it would be desirable, perhaps, to call the attention of Her Majesty's Commissioner in Syria, and of Her Majesty's Consul at Beyrout, to the possible increase of the French army under the pretext of providing for casualties.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

No. 192.

Lord Dufferin to Lord J. Russell.—(Received October 11.)

(No. 11. Secret and Confidential.)

My Lord,

Beyrout, September 29, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Lordship's information, copy of my despatch of this day's date, marked Secret and Confidential, which I have addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at the Porte, relative to the steps taken to procure the recovery of bedding carried off by the Druses, and respecting the pecuniary difficulties of the Turkish authorities in administering the government of the province.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure in No. 192.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, September 29, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that on Tuesday evening, the 25th instant, the Rev. Dr. Thompson, a leading member of the Anglo-American Relief Committee, came to me for the purpose of making a very strong representation on the terrible mortality which must be expected to take place among the refugee Christian population if no steps are taken to recover the bedding, of which, together with everything else, they have been despoiled by the Druses. It would seem that in consequence of the peculiar nature of the climate, which is subject in autumn and winter time to rapid changes of temperature, a sufficient amount of bedding and night covering is one of the greatest necessities of life to the inhabitants of the Lebanon. No matter how destitute a family may be in other respects they will be sure to be abundantly supplied in this particular: deprived of this they cannot exist. Unfortunately bedding is the one thing with which it will be impossible for the Relief Committee to supply them. Food, clothes, money, they can give; but as to bedding, neither the materials out of which it is made, nor the hands to make it, are to be found. Yet if it is not procured, and that very speedily, the people will die. The nights are becoming rapidly colder, and already the women and children are crying out for covering.

Under these circumstances Dr. Thompson came to me to inquire whether I could not induce Fuad Pasha to insist upon the Druses immediately surrendering all the property of this description which they had stolen, to the amount of at least 40,000 beds and coverlets.

On the morning of the day on which Dr. Thompson made me this important communication Abro Efendi, the gentleman whom Fuad Pasha has appointed to represent him during his absence from Beyrout, had informed me that he was entirely destitute of funds, that he had vainly endeavoured to effect a loan, and that unless money was forthcoming within eight-and-forty hours he should be obliged to stop the daily rations the Government was serving out to the refugees. Could not my influence induce the English merchants to receive his proposals more favourably? I briefly replied that a loan was not an affair of influence, but of security, and that any interference on my part would be simply useless.

At the same time I very much fear that if the Government is compelled to stop the supply of daily rations to the refugees the consequences will be disastrous. Not only will several thousand fresh applicants be thrown upon the lists of the Relief Committee, but such an act of inhumanity and want of faith, however unwillingly committed, would at once destroy the slender confidence in the intentions of the Government which Fuad Pasha's conduct is in some slight degree restoring; and the prospect of even a provisional settlement of the country will be as remote as it was two months ago. Unhappily the only securities which can be made available

for a loan upon the spot are the Custom-house dues, but it is quite uncertain whether these have not been already secretly mortgaged at Constantinople. The Ottoman Bank and the English merchants here are inexorable. Unless, therefore, something is done at once, the catastrophe cannot be prevented. Under these circumstances I have ventured upon a step of which I trust your Excellency will not disapprove. I have offered to place my private credit at the disposal of Fuad Pasha, and to supply him at once with the sum of 5,000*l.* on the understanding that in addition to the doubtful securities he has to offer, he pledges me his personal honour for the repayment of the debt within a given time. To this transaction I have affixed but one condition, for the due fulfilment of which I have also required Fuad Pasha's word of honour, viz., that within a certain time 40,000 beds and coverlets shall be placed at the disposal of five persons, three native Christians and two Europeans, selected by myself, but acting in the name of the Relief Committee, who shall repair to five circles in the Lebanon, and distribute the recovered property to their rightful owners.

By thus relieving, and at the same time taking advantage of the necessities of Fuad Pasha, their daily rations are continued to the refugees, the scandal and distress that would result from a break-down in the Government system of relief is prevented, and the lives of hundreds of women and children who would have died from want of covering at night will be saved. The only inconvenience that could possibly attend this arrangement would arise from it becoming known that I myself was concerned in it. Against this contingency I have taken every precaution. My name will not appear in any way mixed up with the transaction: all the pecuniary part of the business will be done through the Ottoman Bank, whose manager is a personal friend of my own, and the restoration of the bedding will proceed under the superintendence of the Anglo-American Relief Committee.

In conclusion, I must beg your Excellency to observe that, had I waited to bring this subject under the consideration of the Commission, much precious time would have been lost, as the Commission is not even yet officially constituted. The beds would probably have been partly destroyed, or plundered, by the French soldiery, or concealed by the flying Druses; while, at the same time, their recovery would have been undertaken by Fuad Pasha with far less alacrity than at present, when it has become a point of honour with him to restore them.

I would further venture to remark that, in undertaking these pecuniary liabilities, I am anxious it should be understood by your Excellency, and by Her Majesty's Government, that I have simply indulged, on my own responsibility, a charitable sentiment. I neither expect, nor should I desire, to be relieved of any of the chances which may be the result of what I am afraid may justly be considered a commercial imprudence. If I have brought the subject at all under your Excellency's attention, it is simply because I think it my duty to keep you informed of every circumstance, however trifling, which may help your Excellency to arrive at a correct appreciation of the successive phases which the Syrian question is assuming; and the only grace for which I could venture to apply on the present occasion would be, that your Excellency would favour me with an assurance that, in acting as I have done, I have not had the misfortune to meet your Excellency's disapproval.

I have, &c.

(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

No. 193.

Lord Dufferin to Lord J. Russell.—(Received October 10.)

(No. 12.)

My Lord,

Beyrout, September 29, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship copy of a despatch dated yesterday, which I have addressed to Her Majesty's

Ambassador at the Porte respecting the first meeting of the Commission.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 193.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, September 28, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that the first meeting of the Commission took place on Wednesday, the 26th instant, at 2 o'clock, at the house of M. Novikow, the Russian Commissioner.

A note was drawn up, signed, and sent to his Excellency Fuad Pasha, announcing the arrival of the Commissioners, and inviting his Excellency to permit us to have the advantage of commencing our proceedings under his auspices.

A copy of this note I have the honour to inclose.

No other business of importance was transacted at this meeting, except that an agreement was come to to take into our immediate consideration the condition of the Christian population at Damascus.

I have the honour to inclose, for your Excellency's information, copy of a letter I have addressed to Consul Brant relative to this subject.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 2 in No. 193.

Collective Note addressed by the European Commissioners to Fuad Pasha.

le Ministre,

Beyrout, le 26 Septembre, 1860.

NOUS Soussignés, Commissaires de l'Autriche, de la France, de la Grande Bretagne, de la Prusse, et de la Russie, nous trouvant réunis à Beyrouth, avons l'honneur d'en donner avis à votre Excellence, afin qu'elle veuille bien prendre les dispositions nécessaires pour se mettre, aussitôt que possible, en rapport avec nous.

Une communication reçue de nos Missions respectives à Constantinople nous a informée de la participation que votre Excellence devait prendre à nos travaux, et de la qualité de Président qui lui était dévolue toutes les fois qu'elle assisterait aux séances de la Commission. Nous sommes prêts à nous rendre à la convocation qu'elle voudra bien nous adresser en la dite qualité, et nous nous félicitons d'une circonstance qui nous paraît être la meilleure garantie du succès de l'œuvre à laquelle seront consacrés nos efforts communs.

Dans le cas où votre Excellence ne pourrait pas se rendre à Beyrouth en ce moment, elle jugerait sans doute à propos de nous en instruire et de déléguer la personne qui serait chargée par elle de venir siéger avec nous aux conditions stipulées à Constantinople entre la Porte Ottomane et les Représentants des Puissances intéressées.

Nous Soussignés, &c.

(Signé)

WECKBECKER.
L. BECLARD.
DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.
REHFUES.
NOVIKOW.

Inclosure 3 in No. 193.

Lord Dufferin to Consul Brant.

Sir,

Beyrout, September 27, 1860.

I BEG to inform you that at the meeting of the European Commissioners, which took place for the first time yesterday, I ventured to suggest that each member should request the Consul of his nation at Damascus to furnish him with a report on the present state of that city, both as regards its sanitary condition and the general prospects of the Christian population.

This proposal having been agreed to, I have to request that you would be good enough to forward to me, at your earliest convenience, such information on the above points as you may think it desirable to submit to the consideration of the Commissioners, together with any suggestion you may have to make as to what still remains to be done by the authorities, in order to arrest the progress of disease, and restore the moral confidence of the Christian portion of the inhabitants.

It would be desirable that, before writing anything on the subject you should put yourself into communication with your colleagues in order that, if possible, your report may be identic with theirs. Perhaps, even, it would be better still to send a joint report.

Major Fraser has written me word that a dreadful stench proceeds from the bodies which lie beneath the ruins of the Christian quarter.

An attempt to dig them out and bury them properly would only increase the danger of pestilence. The best remedy would be to level the walls which are now standing, and so cover the whole area with a thick and uniform stratum of débris.

The Christians certainly might object to this, as likely to impede the recovery of any treasure they may have concealed, but such a consideration must give way before the paramount necessity of taking precautions against the spread of infection.

I am, &c.

(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

No. 194.

Lord Dufferin to Lord J. Russell.—(Received October 11.)

(No. 13.)

My Lord,

Beyrout, September 29, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith a copy of my despatch of this day's date which I have addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at the Porte, requesting the disarmament and ultimate pacification of this province.

I have, &c.

(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure in No. 194.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, September 29, 1860.

I TRUST your Excellency will forgive me if I venture from time to time so far to anticipate the future as to draw your Excellency's attention to various questions connected with the settlement of this province which the deliberations of the Commission will be likely hereafter to evolve.

By so doing I shall be able to approach the discussion to which they will give rise, with the great advantage of knowing your Excellency's impressions in regard to them.

One of the most important and most pressing subjects to which we shall have to give our attention will be the disarmament of the inhabitants

of the Mountain. It seems to me, that such a precaution ought to be one of the first to be adopted. Yet by whom is it to be put into execution? If the duty were to be delegated to the Turkish soldiery, it would be inadequately accomplished. If the assistance of the French army were requested, the Druses would be disarmed under circumstances likely to give rise to inconveniences already sufficiently dwelt upon in my previous despatches, while the Maronites would be probably visited with a very partial and inefficient inquisition.

Again, another subject, apparently less pressing, yet in reality requiring an immediate attention, is that which has relation to the future security of the Christians, after Fud Pasha and the French army shall have returned home. It might be said, that it will be time enough to consider this part of the question when the Commissioners shall have elaborated their scheme for the future government of the country; but the truth is, that the character of that scheme itself will be greatly affected by the nature of the authority intrusted with the task of superintending its application. A plan that in the abstract might be the one best calculated to promote the general interests of the inhabitants might be rejected as impracticable if it were destined to be carried out under the auspices of a feeble executive; while another of a more questionable character might be preferred simply on account of its negative qualities.

I confess that during the last few weeks I have conceived an opinion, which every day is confirming, that all our ingenuity will not be able to devise a plan subtle enough to harmonize, under any government whatever, the discordant elements of which society in Syria is composed, unless we are allowed to leave behind us the means of maintaining an interval of quiet, during which our workmanship may have time to cement and acquire the necessary consistency to enable it to stand alone.

I will content myself in the present despatch with drawing the attention of your Excellency to these two questions.

In considering them, perhaps it may occur to your Excellency, that the first difficulty might be mitigated by the presence of three or four thousand English troops, while an occupation of the country for a few years by a joint European force might be a happy solution of the second.

I confess that such an opinion would coincide completely with my own impressions. I believe that English troops would have far less difficulty in dealing with the Druses than those of any other country.

The disarmament of the Druse nation, with their assistance, would become a far more favourable operation than if carried on under the auspices of the French, whose interference may finally lead to the extermination of the nation, while their presence would at once deprive the present armed intervention of that character of partizanship which it now unhappily possesses.

With regard to the permanent occupation of the country, I am afraid it will be impossible to do without it. I am afraid confidence even will not return until it is known that it has been decided upon by Europe. Already the Christians are forecasting the dangers of the future, and are everywhere inquiring, "What will become of us when Europe relaxes her hold on the tiger's throat?"

Unless some guarantee of this kind is held out to them for the future, it is possible they will leave the country. This observation, however, applies more to the Damascenes than to the natives of the Mountain.

Trusting that your Excellency will forgive me for having ventured thus abruptly to bring these two important points under your consideration, I have, &c.

(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

No. 195.

Lord Dufferin to Lord J. Russell.—(Received October 11.)

(No. 14.)

My Lord,

Beyrout, September 29, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Lordship's information, copy of my despatch of this day's date, which I have addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at the Porte, detailing some of the chief events of the past week.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure in No. 195.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, September 29, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that two columns of French troops, numbering about 2,000 men each, under the immediate command of General de Beaufort, left Beyrout on the morning of Tuesday, the 25th instant.

On the 28th instant, intelligence reached us that one of these columns had arrived at Deir-el-Kamar.

I regret to be obliged to add, that some acts of great atrocity have been perpetrated on the march by certain Christians who accompanied the troops.

At Ain Anûb, about four hours from Beyrout, an old blind Druse of 80 years of age has been savagely murdered.

At a village called Bshetfin, a little beyond, a young Druse of 25 was shot.

The most savage act of violence, however, they have yet committed, was the murder of an unfortunate Druse woman, close to the French camp. Some boys followed her, shouting out to the troops: "A Druse woman! A Druse woman!" at the same time throwing stones at her until she fell down insensible. A Maronite woman then joined the party, and, calling vengeance on the head of the Druses, took his sword from one of the French soldiers who was quietly looking on, and cut off her head.

The excuse urged for these acts of wickedness will be, that the Druses fired on the troops. I have reason to believe that this was not the case.

Having acquainted M. Bécclard with these deplorable facts, he expressed the greatest indignation, and promised to write to the General requesting him to punish the perpetrators of such crimes.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

P.S.—I may mention that, on the 23rd and 24th instants, 828 Zouaves and 400 horses arrived at Beyrout.

It may be calculated that about 8,000 French troops of all nations are now in Syria.

D. AND C.

No. 195*.

Sir H. Bulwer to Lord J. Russell.—(Received October 14.)

(No. 640.)

My Lord,

Therapia, October 1, 1860.

I HAD this day a public audience of the Sultan, by appointment, and delivered to him Her Majesty's letter.

He appealed to me as to the horror with which he had heard of the scenes in Syria, and of his desire that all persons found guilty with

respect to that affair should be duly punished; and I told him that the measures taken by Fuad Pasha had been approved by Her Majesty's Ambassador, and would, I thought, be equally approved by Her Majesty's Government.

His Imperial Majesty asked after the health of the Queen, and I took my leave.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. L. BULWER.

No. 196.

Lord Dufferin to Lord J. Russell.—(Received October 16.)

(No. 15.)

My Lord,

Beyrout, September 29, 1860.

I REGRET to have to inform your Lordship that I have just received authentic intelligence of the murder of twenty more Druses by the Maronites that accompany the French army.

I propose immediately bringing this subject under the notice of my colleagues.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

No. 197.

Lord Dufferin to Lord J. Russell.—(Received October 11.)

(No. 16.)

My Lord,

Beyrout, September 29, 1860.

WITH reference to my previous despatch No. 15 of this day's date, I have the honour to transmit herewith, for your Lordship's information, copy of a note which I have felt it to be my duty to address to his Excellency Fuad Pasha respecting the late atrocities inflicted upon the Druses by the Maronite followers of the French army.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure in No. 197.

Lord Dufferin to Fuad Pasha.

Excellency,

Beyrout, September 29, 1860.

I HAVE learnt, with feelings of horror and amazement, that several unarmed Druses, including a woman and a blind old man, have been murdered by the Maronites in the neighbourhood of Deir-el-Kamar, and at other places.

It seems to me a deplorable circumstance that the return of order and the installation of justice in the Mountain should be inaugurated under such sinister auspices.

I cannot think that the intervention of the authority of the Porte and of European influence ought to become the signal for a renewal of the atrocities which have already deluged this country with blood. Instead of benefiting their co-religionists, the unhappy authors of these crimes will confuse the cause of justice, and irretrievably forfeit the sympathy their misfortunes have acquired for them. In the name of religion and of humanity, I have to entreat your Excellency to put a stop to such brutal excesses.

The urgency of the occasion must excuse my importunity in drawing your Excellency's attention to this painful subject.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Consul Brant to Lord J. Russell.—(Received October 11.)

(No. 26.)

My Lord,

Damascus, September 27, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, copy of a despatch to Her Majesty's Ambassador at the Porte, in reply to two circulars received from his Excellency.

I have, &c
(Signed) JAS. BRANT.

Inclosure in No. 198.

Consul Brant to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Damascus, September 25, 1860.

IN replying to your Excellency's despatch No. 8, Confidential, on the 30th August, I entered so fully into the subject of it that I did not leave much more to be said; but your Excellency's Circular of August to the Syrian Consuls, with its inclosure, dated 6th August, to the Consuls of the European Provinces, require a specific answer.

To some of the points on which your Excellency had required information, I had begun to prepare my reply, when I was seized with a severe bilious attack, occasioned by close confinement to the house, the extreme heat of the weather, and the great excitement I had undergone. I am only just recovering sufficiently to give attention to subjects which still excite the mind in no ordinary degree.

I so fully concur in the wisdom and justice of your Excellency's observations and instructions contained in the Circular of the 6th August, that it only requires me to say that they will be the guide of my conduct on all occasions.

The position of Syria is certainly different from that of other parts of Turkey, inasmuch as a war between the hostile sects of Maronites and Druses has been raging, and an outbreak of fanaticism has occurred of which recent ages do not afford a parallel.

The two cases, as your Excellency pointed out, in their origin were distinct, but they ultimately became blended together, and will probably be submitted to one treatment. The Porte has sent its ablest man, with ample support and unlimited powers; and his Excellency Fuad Pasha has used these powers efficiently, and has in some degree restored confidence. But a very inadequate idea must have been formed of the cruelties perpetrated by the Mussulman fanatics, if it be supposed that the remembrance of such inexpressible horrors, such unexampled atrocities, can be obliterated by the imperfect satisfaction likely to be given. Indemnity might be made for material losses, but it is beyond the power of man to apply a remedy for the loss of husbands, wives, and children, by such indescribable, such fiendish cruelties.

It remains to be seen what compensation the Government will make for the ruin which has involved the whole Christian community. The plunder recovered is distributed to those Christians who apply for things they want; but an extravagant valuation is affixed. No indication is, however, given of the mode in which the account is to be settled. Influential people get the best things at fair prices, but the rates at which the almost worthless articles are offered to the poor unprotected persons are so enormous that although in the greatest want they decline to accept them. The equivocal conduct of those who preside over the distribution of the allowances accorded by the Government, and of the necessities of bedding and clothing, does not satisfy the poor people, but, on the contrary, makes them imagine they are unfairly treated, and despair of obtaining justice.

It is, I am well aware, the object of the Sultan's allies to sustain His Majesty's Government; but the means of doing this are not very obvious. That Fuad Pasha will establish the authority of the Porte I have no

doubt, but if afterwards the same mode of governing be continued by agents of the same stamp as formerly, no better result is probable.

In my various Reports on the state of this Pashalic, I have often made suggestions for the improvement of the administration, and for the better security of the inhabitants in their property and rights: but since the outbreak matters are so changed that it is not merely the introduction of improvements that will re-establish the Government on a solid basis—a complete change of system is required, which must be the result of the serious consideration and inquiry of the Commissioners.

As to the financial system, there was none that I could ever discover, except that as much should be extracted from the people as they had to give, and that as much as possible of these exactions should remain in the hands of the employés in its passage to the Treasury. Such a system, if it can be so called, is not susceptible of improvement—it must be totally changed.

Fuad Pasha is considered by many not to have been prompt enough in executing criminals, and thus to have diminished the effect which would otherwise have been produced. A prompt punishment would have struck a degree of terror into the people which would have made a permanent and deep impression: the gradual executions have engendered rather a sulky feeling of wrong, a stronger enmity towards the Christians, and a fixed desire to avenge themselves; and thus the Mahometans and Christians are more inimical to each other than they were before.

There is also a strong feeling that the Ulema have been too leniently dealt with. Fuad Pasha says he cannot get positive evidence against some who are in arrest, but most people think the evidence would have sufficed to have hanged any other persons. The Sheikh Abdallah el Halebee, the Mufti, and Ghuzzee Effendi, are believed to have pushed on the Mussulmans to the excesses they committed. The first in particular is known to have been the chief instigator in the murder of the Christians. By common report I learn that evidence enough of guilt has been given against this man: his residence was full of plunder, but was not searched. He was assailed in his house by Moslem women wailing the execution of their husbands, and charging him with having caused their fate by his counsels.

Everybody believes that sufficient evidence could be found if it be wanted, and that to allow these men to escape the punishment of death will be a great wrong, and do more harm than the executions have done good.

There is no doubt that Mussulman fanaticism has been the occasion of all the troubles, and that to crush it is the best chance of future security. One great means would be to prevent the Mecca caravan from assembling at Damascus as the point of departure, and from its being made the point of separation on the return of the pilgrims. This is not necessary since the sea is open, and steam affords a quicker and less dangerous mode of reaching Mecca than the overland route. The change would have the additional advantage of saving a very heavy annual expense to the Pashalic, supposed to be upwards of 40,000*l*.

This year, on their return, the pilgrims were not allowed to come into the city in a body, with the usual ceremonies, but were ordered to return to their homes from their camp outside the gates.

The Hady from Damascus once peremptorily abolished, fanaticism would gradually diminish, and perhaps die out. I mentioned the subject to Fuad Pasha, and he seemed to think the suggestion a good one. It would be desirable to reorganize the Grand Council, to select—not members of the Ulema—but men of business habits, and to pay them for the time they devoted to their work: they hitherto have paid themselves by keeping back from the Treasury large balances, and by taking bribes from applicants for justice to obtain decisions in their favour. Commissioners are now employed in examining claims of the Treasury against many of the members of the late Grand Council, and the aggregate of the balances is said to amount to a very considerable sum.

Further suggestions do not occur to me at the present moment, but should any strike me I will not fail to bring them to your Excellency's attention.

After Fuad Pasha has re-established the Sultan's authority, a strong, honest, impartial Administration must replace that which has been so long bringing on the ruin of the country, and of which the massacres have been the natural consummation.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JAS. BRANT.

No. 199.

Sir M. Montefiore to Lord J. Russell.—(Received October 16.)

My Lord, *East Cliff Lodge, Ramsgate, October 16, 1860.*

WITH painful reluctance I submit to your Lordship the accompanying translation of a letter from the Heads of the Jewish community at Damascus.

There can be no doubt whatever that the Jewish body of that city is guiltless of any participation in the recent outbreak, and I venture to believe that your Lordship requires no argument to satisfy your mind on this point.

May I entreat your Lordship, as heretofore, to exercise the powerful influence of Her Majesty's Government to protect and save the Jews of Damascus from the perils to which they are so imminently exposed? As the affair is urgent, I venture personally to attend your Lordship with this letter and its inclosure.

I have, &c.
(Signed) MOSES MONTEFIORE.

Inclosure in No. 199.

The Heads of the Jewish Community at Damascus to Sir M. Montefiore.

Damascus, 7th Tishri, 5621 (September 23, 1860).

To Sir Moses Montefiore, Bart., our benefactor and deliverer, whom may God long preserve, &c., &c.

WE commence by praying to God to grant you length of days and many years of prosperity, in which you may find grace in the sight of mighty kings, rulers, and princes, in whose days may Israel be saved, and Judah dwell in safety!

We had the honour to address you a letter in the course of last month, in which we spoke of the enmity of the Christians towards the Jews in Damascus, which has risen up in addition to all former hatred. Now a great, bitter, and intense jealousy fills their hearts, by reason that they have been murdered, plundered, and maltreated, whereas the children of Israel were left uninjured.

Our hearts were then moved by the apprehension lest, by reason of this bitter hatred and jealousy, false accusations should be brought against us. We therefore besought you to aid us by obtaining instructions from the English Government to the Consuls, Generals, and Commanders who come to Syria, also from the Turkish Government to his Highness Fuad Pasha, that he shall stand by us, and not be ready to receive malicious reports against the Jews, for his Excellency is a just and upright man.

Now we have to inform you that since the commencement of the month of Ellul (August) the Christians have been plotting against us and setting up false accusations against us; many have been thrown into prison and wrongly accused of having participated in the massacre. The Christians are believed in their statements; when they say "so and so killed some one," that person is immediately brought before the Tribunal. Testimony of honourable men among the Turks is not received, when they declare that the accused was in their house during the tumult. Even the evidence of Christians is not received when they bear witness to the Jews having been

hidden with themselves, and not parted from each other during the whole time of the outbreak. Even should the accuser himself testify anything in favour of an accused Israelite, it is not attended to. A woman accused a certain Jew, who she thought had killed her husband; she was asked to swear according to her own faith that the accused was the man, she refused to swear, and she asked the Jew to swear by the law of Moses that he had not done it, so that he might go free. But the tribunal would not listen thereto. Even the testimony of our Chief Rabbi has been rejected. The Jews still are in prison, and one has since died in his dungeon from the effects of terror.

Oh, Sir! consider, only for a moment, how innocent and pious Jews, without sin, are being thrown into prison with murderers; and how all testimony and proof that they may bring forward will not aid them in their deliverance. We know not, therefore, what is to become of the people of Israel when the Christians see there is no hope for them, but their false accusations are listened to from the judgment-seat; but to the voice of Israel there is none to give ear, or to reply—none to pity or to compassionate.

Those who rose against the Christians and killed them are not judged according to the ordinary laws of the land, nor is evidence taken in the usual manner; but there is established what is termed an "extraordinary tribunal."

Now it appears that it is intended to judge the Jews also by this tribunal, and to condemn them to death upon the mere word of the Christians. This is, indeed, a great and bitter sorrow. How is it possible to compare the condition of the Jews with that of those who rose up against the Christians? Were the Jews themselves during that terrible time not in the greatest fear and danger? Surely there was "but a step betwixt us and death." Most of the Jews hid themselves in the houses of respectable Turks, in cellars, and in caves, and in company with Christians. Is it possible to suppose that one who was in momentary fear for his own life should rise up to kill another? Reason and common sense testify against it. God forbid that such a thought could enter into the mind of Her Most Gracious Majesty the Queen of England, or her Government, for whose prosperity, honour, and glory we, the congregation of Damascus, have prayed these twenty years.

In this trouble do we lay our supplications before her, beseeching her to have pity and compassion upon poor afflicted Israel in Damascus, who only desire her aid, support, and all-powerful influence, so that the captive Jews may have a fair trial before the ordinary tribunals, in accordance with the well-known custom of the country. For Israel, both young and old, are wholly guiltless in this matter, and free from the crime of shedding blood.

Truly, this is a time of great trouble and distress; for every Israelite dwelling in Damascus is in great dread lest he should be falsely accused: for there is none to say unto the Christians, Why do ye thus? It has been openly declared by some of them that they will grant Israel neither peace nor rest. Even already have they begun to conspire against the best, the most honourable, and esteemed of our community—the well-known Jacob Aboulaffia, and Solomon Farchi, son of Isaac Hyam Farchi (of whose hospitality you partook on your visit to Damascus), a youth 14 years of age, an only son of his father's house. A certain Christian declared that his father was killed between the two houses of the above-named parties. Were not the Lord on our side, what would become of us? The accused being under French protection, the French and Greek Consuls prevented this case being brought before the tribunal, but had it heard before the two Consuls. The Lord brought innocence to light.

And on what was the whole accusation based? If a man was found slain in the highway at the time of the rising of the mob, when all the streets of the Christians, as well as the streets of the Jews and Turks, which are near each other, were filled with the slain, was it in the power of man to prevent a murder being committed before his own house? Would the ruffians have had any regard? Who should tell them not to

murder all who stood in their way? Were the Jews, then, secure of their own lives?

Wherefore, we beseech you to have compassion upon us, to hear our prayer, and to exert yourself to obtain the influence of the English Government, as well as that of the French and Turkish, with His Highness Fuad Pasha, who is an upright Judge; and that instructions may be sent to the English Consul in Damascus, so that the Jews may not be confounded with those who rose up in rebellion, and not be judged in the same tribunal.

You are our father! Hasten to help us! As you have been our former deliverer, so save us now, and be the instrument of terminating our endless troubles.

Attached are the signatures of the Rabbins, the Elders, and most worthy of the Congregation of Damascus, who anxiously await your answer.

(Signed) HYAM ROMANO.
DAVID HARPI.
MENAHEM FARCHI.
JACOB HALEVI.
JACOB PERETZ.
RAPHAEL HALEVI.
ISAAC MAIMON.
AARON JACOB.

No. 200.

Lord J. Russell to Sir H. Bulwer.

(No. 558.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, October 18, 1860.

WITH reference to what your Excellency said to the Sultan respecting the measures of Fuad Pasha in Syria, as reported in your despatch No. 640 of the 1st instant, I have to inform you that the steps taken by Fuad Pasha are approved by Her Majesty's Government.

I am, &c.

(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 201.

Lord J. Russell to Lord Dufferin.

(No. 15.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, October 18, 1860.

I HAVE to inform your Lordship that Her Majesty's Government approve the language which you held and the opinions which you expressed to Fuad Pasha upon Syrian affairs, as reported in your despatch to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople of the 23rd ultimo.

I am, &c.

(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 202.

Lord J. Russell to Lord Dufferin.

(No. 16.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, October 18, 1860.

I HAVE to state to your Lordship that Her Majesty's Government approve of the language which you held to the French General Beaufort, and the letter which you addressed to that officer, as reported in your despatch to Sir Henry Bulwer of the 24th September.

I am, &c.

(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 203.

Lord J. Russell to Lord Dufferin.

(No. 17.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, October 18, 1860.

IN reply to your Lordship's despatch No. 15 of the 29th September, I have to state to you that Her Majesty's Government approve of your intention to bring under the notice of your colleagues the fact of the murder of Druses by the Maronites who accompany the French army.

I am, &c.

(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 204.

Consul Brant to Lord J. Russell.—(Received October 19.)

(No. 30.)

My Lord,

Damascus, October 5, 1860.

I REGRET that I cannot report any improvement in affairs here.

Since Fuad Pasha's departure matters have been slowly deteriorating, and they are beginning to look serious from the incompetency of the Vali Pasha, the effects of which become more apparent every day. I have been informed that his Excellency is in great alarm from the report that the Druses are assembling all the men they can in the Hauran, of their own people, of Koords, of those who have escaped from Damascus to avoid the punishment of their crimes, and all the Arabs and vagabonds who are willing to join them in an attack on the city. It is pretended that they will be able to collect between 7,000 and 8,000 men. How far these reports can be credited I cannot judge: no doubt they are greatly exaggerated, but they have created alarm throughout the country, which the behaviour of the Pasha tends to augment. A Governor of his character would be a misfortune at any time, but at such a moment he is a bar to every hope of improvement and the certain precursor of evil.

Since Fuad Pasha quitted Damascus, his own people have changed their conduct. They refuse to obey the Vali, considering themselves as amenable only to their own Chief, and it is generally asserted that, without a present, they will not do any act of justice.

In the matter of the recruits for the army a great deal has been extorted from persons who had no right to have paid anything, but who without paying could not obtain their rights. People unfit for military service from physical defects are continually harassed by being called up frequently to the Serai, and kept in suspense until they paid something to obtain a certificate, and through the same means others are exempted from performing duties which may be legitimately required.

In short, various practices are revived which were set aside while Fuad Pasha was here. In the distribution to the Christians of the returned plunder certain favoured persons are allowed to select what they please, although they never may have possessed such articles; what valuation may be placed on them I cannot ascertain, but I know that poor people are given articles inferior in quality or condition to those they have lost, while an exorbitant valuation is put upon them, and on complaining they are told that they may put a higher value than the real one on the things they lost. This mode of treating affairs looks too much like what has usually been practised to give satisfaction or promise of a better system; it occasions, therefore, people to look on the future gloomily, and prevents the return of confidence in the Government.

There is a great deal of sickness among the soldiers who are not yet seasoned to the climate, and indulge in the inordinate use of fruit. There are about 1,000 in hospital. About 2,800 conscripts have been taken for the army, and 200 more are required to complete the demand of the Government. They say that about 500 have volunteered, so that when the affair is complete, 3,500 will have been taken from the city.

Between 80 and 90 I am told have paid to the treasury 20,000 piastres each for exemption, although 300 tickets of exemption have been issued; the rest have got off by means of presents which are supposed not to have entered the chest of the treasury, but the pockets of those who are placed over the enrolment.

The allowance of money to the Christians is much in arrears—many have not received theirs for twenty days; this want of exactitude occasions great suffering among them. The excuse is that the public chest is empty, and it is possible that this may be the real cause.

The presence of Fuad Pasha is much required here, and probably as much so at Beyrout. His Excellency is going about among the Druses of the Lebanon, although I cannot obtain any certain knowledge of his movements nor of his acts. I do not hear of any collision between the Druses and the Turkish troops.

The French division under General Beaufort is at or in the neighbourhood of Zahleh, but their movements and position are not exactly known. In fact, we are overwhelmed with reports of all kinds, but we get no information that we can depend upon, nor do the authorities seem better informed, or if they are they plead ignorance.

Yesterday Mussulman houses inhabited by Christians were marked with crosses; this spread alarm among them, and many of the principal are preparing to depart at once. Khaled Pasha was patrolling the town a great part of the night, and the Chiefs of the different quarters were assembled, and ordered to discover the authors of these new insults and marks of ill-will towards the Christians, but I cannot learn that any of the offenders were discovered.

I see now pretty much the same state of affairs as existed before the outbreak. A Vali with neither energy nor courage, possessed with imaginary fears of what may happen, but without the foresight or ability to take measures to apply a remedy. I see a soldiery whose hearts are not in their duty; a population of fanatics, cowed certainly, but sighing for revenge on the Christians. I see the chief instigators of the massacre, in prison it is true, but uncondemned, and who for the disgrace they have suffered on their account must be more excited against the infidels than before. Under such circumstances, were Fuad Pasha to be recalled from Syria, what but a worse calamity than we have already witnessed could be reasonably anticipated?

I have, &c.
(Signed) JAS. BRANT.

No. 203.

Lord Dufferin to Lord J. Russell.—(Received October 19.)

(No. 17.)

My Lord,

Beyrout, October 8, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Lordship's information, copies of further despatches which I have this day addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at the Porte upon various matters connected with my mission.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 205.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, October 1, 1860.

I TRUST that your Excellency will not consider it presumption on my part if, with reference to my despatch of the 29th ultimo, I venture to draw your attention to some further considerations which may be urged

in favour of a British force being sent to assist in the temporary occupation of this country.

As your Excellency will have perceived by my despatch of the 14th ultimo, Fuad Pasha has interdicted General de Beaufort from extending his operations beyond the Lebanon, or conducting his army into the Hauran. After due and impartial deliberation, I have come to the conclusion that in so doing his Excellency has exercised a sound discretion.

In the first place, I am decidedly of opinion that for the present the difficulties incident to the settlement of the Mountain will be more than sufficient to occupy all the attention and all the military resources of the Government; and that it would be out of the question for Fuad Pasha to absent himself on a distant expedition at a time when it will require all his energy and intelligence to restore order, and make arrangements to save from certain death by cold and starvation the 50,000 subjects of his Sovereign who are at present utterly destitute.

On the other hand, to allow General de Beaufort to undertake the campaign by himself would, I fear, be very imprudent. Pursued to their uttermost strongholds by the French, whom they regard as their deadly enemies, the Druses would probably engage in a desperate and hopeless resistance; an enormous amount of unnecessary bloodshed would be the consequence, and, inasmuch as but a small proportion of the Hauran Druses took part in the late atrocities, the heaviest proportion of the punishment would fall on that section of the nation which least deserved it.

On the other hand, I am certainly disposed to consider that it is desirable a European force should show itself in that district which has come to be considered as a kind of unapproachable Alsatia, to which all the ruffians of the land can fly from justice. Fear is the only sentiment through which any of these tribes can be permanently influenced; and as long as the Druses consider they possess an asylum to which they can retire at pleasure, the difficulty of controlling them will be much enhanced.

Moreover, though accompanied but by a portion of his people it was from the Hauran that the most bloodthirsty of all the Druse Chiefs issued; it was by Hauran Druses that the massacres at Hasbeya and Rasheya were perpetrated; and it is to the Hauran that the most guilty of the Lebanon Chiefs have fled.

Under these circumstances it seems to me that the work of retribution will be imperfectly accomplished unless an assize of justice be held over the Hauran as well as over the Lebanon. Should it, however, be thought desirable, as I trust it will be, to adopt this suggestion, it ought to be carried into execution on the same principle as that which has been applied to the Mountain.

Fuad Pasha ought to appear in the capacity of a judge rather than that of a conqueror; and, above all things, care ought to be taken to avoid rendering the Druses desperate and driving them into a war. This danger can only be obviated in one way. If Fuad Pasha went alone with a Turkish force either he would sustain a reverse which would be fatal, or he would endeavour to conjure opposition by a leniency which would only bring the authority of the Porte into greater contempt than ever. He must, therefore, be supported by a foreign force; but if that force is French the chances of obviating war would be reduced to a minimum. When I inform your Excellency that in order to enlist as private soldiers in the regiments told off for the Syrian expedition serjeants and corporals themselves belonging to other regiments tore off their stripes, you will easily understand the amount of military ardour which must be seething in the ranks of M. de Beaufort's soldiery. Under such circumstances a campaign in the Hauran would necessarily be most sanguinary. All the disadvantages, however, which attend an expedition undertaken by Turkish troops alone or accompanied by a French corps d'armée would be obviated if an English force was also allowed to take the field.

Such a circumstance would at once convince the Druses that Fuad Pasha did not intend to exterminate their race, that their cause was not desperate, and that it was in the interest of the great majority of the

nation to allow their country to be occupied without opposition, and the course of justice to have free way; while at the same time the presence of an English General would serve to control the independence and curb the excesses of the French.

To these considerations two more may be added. I venture to think it a matter of essential importance that the Druse nation should be made to comprehend that the English Government is prepared to take as willing a share in the punishment of their crimes as that of any other European nation, and that the European army has to vindicate the cause of humanity and not to act as the partizans of the Maronites.

This object I am afraid can only be secured by England taking an obvious part in the exaction of the retribution which is about to be required. Furthermore, I confess, though I doubt not that even with the small force under his command M. de Beaufort might make himself ultimately master of the Ledjah, the natural citadel of the Hauran, yet the progress of his arms is not so certain to be unchecked but that it would become advisable that Europe, if she intervenes at all, should intervene with a force more decidedly irresistible.

In reference to the above considerations, which I venture with the greatest submission to place before your Excellency, I have the honour to inclose two most admirable documents, one a memorandum drawn up with the greatest care and ability by Colonel Burnaby, at present attached by the War Office to M. de Beaufort's corps d'armée, on the general equipment most suitable to any expeditionary force that might come to Syria, and the other a memorandum by Mr. Graham on the climate and geographical features of the Hauran.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 2 in No. 205.

Memorandum by Lieutenant-Colonel Burnaby.

I PROPOSE in the following memoranda to endeavour in such a manner to describe the topography of Syria, the great variety of its temperature, its resources, and its means of transport, so that those persons having the direction of the equipment of a military force to Syria, may be enabled to form some idea of what are the chief requirements to be provided, without which considerable inconvenience and delay would arise in a country of so peculiar a nature.

The Topography of Syria.

As to the topography of that portion of Syria which has been the scene of the late disturbances, and over which the present operations are likely to extend, a good notion will be obtained of the difficulty of traversing it by placing before one a map of Syria, wherein its numerous mountains and their gorges are delineated. The best map of the country is that published by Van de Welde; all others, with the exception of a map, on a small scale, which accompanies Murray's Handbook to Syria, are incorrect in position and deficient in the names of places.

It will be seen that between the Mediterranean Sea and the Lebanon Range, which runs twenty miles parallel to it, numberless lateral spurs run out, extending in bold headlands; the gorges and ravines between each are equally numerous, besides being deep and steep. Among these run the many streams which carry their waters to the sea.

Bridges exist at all points over which the beaten paths lay, but during the rains many of these streams are impassable.

Beyond the Lebanon, the summits of which vary from 5,000 to 8,000 feet above the level of the sea, is the valley of the Bukâa, with the stream of the Leitain, averaging twenty feet in width.

This valley, which is about six miles wide, is, in many places,

marshy (the reeds growing in which, forming the covering of the habitations of this country, have been lately destroyed by fire by the Druses, to prevent the Christians recovering their ruined houses). Parallel, again, to the Lebanon runs the Anti-Lebanon, with the Jehel-esh-Sheikh to its south, which is no less than 9,376 feet above the level of the sea.

Further inland beyond extends that vast tract of country which, although flat, is rocky, and difficult of quick passage. On it is built the town of Damascus. It comprises the countries known as the Jedur, the Jaulan, the Ledjah, and the Hauran, all of which are little inhabited on account of the Arabs having gradually encroached themselves and prevented others from inhabiting it.

Such is the country that it would be required to traverse by the beaten rugged paths which, by Europeans, would be called but sheep-tracks.

These average ten inches in breadth, and, as the hill sides are almost vertical in places, the footing presents a dangerous appearance. It would be impossible for an army to pass along many of these paths without the assistance of the Engineers and their tools to widen and remove the blocks of stone which impede them.

A detachment of Engineers with six mules, laden with twelve shovels and twenty-six pickaxes on each, precede the French troops in their marches on the Lebanon.

From careful observations I have taken of the irregularities of the grounds, I compute that the distance actually trodden over from two points which from each other are ten miles, averages sixteen miles, and that the same fatigue incurred in climbing and descending the steep paths over that distance would have enabled a man to have marched on good roads, under a similar temperature, one-third further, or twenty-four miles.

Too great attention cannot therefore be taken that the feet of the men are appropriately provided with shoes to encounter such fatigue, and that the amount carried by the soldier be as small as possible.

The shoes worn by the soldiers of the French expedition now in Syria come below the ankle, and are similar in shape to those worn in England by such as are engaged in active games and by pedestrians, where great activity of the foot is required. A canvas gaiter covers a portion of this shoe, and extends halfway below the knee; it is provided with two rows of buttons, one of which is used when the gaiter is worn tight to the leg below the trousers; the other is used when the trousers is buttoned over by the gaiter, so as to raise it, and thus form a knickerbocker. The shoes are not blacked, which colour seems to attract the rays of the sun more than the natural colour of the leather, which is kept moist with grease.

Every French soldier is provided with two pairs of canvas gaiters and one pair of leather gaiters, and two pairs of shoes; he never wears socks.

It is considered that much greater freedom is given to the movement of the ankle by the adoption of this mode of shoeing.

The Temperature and Climate of Syria.

I now come to the temperature and climates of Syria; the greatest dissimilarity prevails, owing to the great differences of elevation and exposure. Two climates at the same time are present, which, in traversing the country, have to be met. One is hot, such as that found in the deep depressions of the plains and along the coast; the other, among the altitudes of the mountains, is comparatively cold. The nights are uniformly cold. The range of the thermometer is great; sometimes descending below zero and rising above 100° Fahrenheit. Such is the climate of the country: one day the parching sun of the plain has to be encountered, and the next day one has to provide against the cold of the mountain-pass. Too great attention cannot therefore be paid to the clothing of the troops.

To provide for cold or heat separately is no difficult task, but to provide for both at once and at the same time, being obliged to have

regard to the weight and its mode of carriage by the soldier, is matter requiring some foresight.

I herewith annex a complete enumeration of the articles carried by the soldiers of the expeditionary force now campaigning in Syria, and which, after daily observation, I find have been selected with great attention to the exigencies of the country and its climates; nothing seems to be wanting, and nothing superfluous.

The rains which fall in Syria have specially to be considered and provided for. The first rains fall from about the 6th of November, and continue fifteen days; the second, or regular rains, begin to fall in January, and continue till the end of April.

The means of Transport in Syria.

The next point to be considered is the means of transport over a country presenting such difficulties of passage.

Transport in Syria is solely effected by beasts of burden, which consist of mules, camels, and donkeys.

The best mules, I am informed by a merchant of Shumlane, will carry as much as 375 lbs., but on an average they will carry 300 lbs.; this, however, is without reckoning the corn which, on long inland marches through a devastated country, would have to be carried by the animal.

A camel will carry about the same quantity as a mule (if anything, less): that is to say, a good mule will carry more than a good camel.

A donkey will carry 200 lbs.

Syria, in its prosperous state, found it difficult to supply 2,000 mules for the allied armies during the Crimean campaign, and suffered on account of this abstraction; to-day there is an unusual scarcity of these animals, inasmuch as the Druses have taken with them all theirs, as well as all or most of those that belonged to the Christians, as a means of transporting their material and their families towards the Hauran.

Camels are not numerous.

The French, who sent forward to make the necessary arrangements for the arrival of their troops and their sojourn in the country, at once made provision for their means of transport. In addition to their admirable Mule-transport Corps, two squadrons of which, 500 strong, they brought with them, they at once made arrangements for the hiring of a large number of mules at the rate of 2s. 8d. a-day, which sum includes the forage for the beast and the wages and food of the driver, one of which attends to every two mules. Only a very limited number, in Beyrout and its vicinity, could now be obtained. It would be extremely difficult to obtain 100 average-conditioned mules, and these even could not be procured at the above rate.

I have considered what steps could, under the existing circumstances, be taken to provide transport, if required. It would be best to avoid the necessity of purchasing mules, which would entail the necessity and trouble to provide their forage and pack-saddles, besides having to hire and ration their drivers.

I am of opinion that 1,000 mules could be hired with facility, provided they came from various places, such as Aleppo, Latakia, and Iskanderoon, and also from the interior. By visiting these places, or even by a competent person from Beyrout communicating with the Consuls, contracts could be entered into with the different Muleteer Sheiks by which the hire of mules could be effected. The cost of their transport would have, of course, to be paid.

In the spring of the year, at Jerusalem, any number of mules, almost, can be procured, after they have brought down the pilgrims from Armenia and Russia. The latter are waited for at Samsoon, whither the Armenian muleteers go for that purpose. A great portion of these numerous pilgrims, after the performance of their religious duties, return home by sea, and thus the greater portion of the mules that brought them there can be obtained.

A force of 4,000 men would require 1,000 mules, if the bell-tents have to be used by the men; should the *tentes d'abri* be used, a less quantity would suffice.

A military operation would, chiefly, have to be in the Hauran, which is six days from Beyrout, and four days from Hepha. It would be necessary to establish inland depôts of provisions, which would enable a portion of the mules to be used between the depôt and the seaport, and the other portion between the depôt and the troops.

After the commencement of operations, I recommend, as places of depôt, Nawa and El Mezâreb; but on the subject of accommodation in the parts of Syria I am alluding to, I shall give a lengthened account in a special Memorandum on the subject.

In the hiring of mules and the obtaining of storehouses considerable foresight will be necessary in the beginning, so as to prevent the French from previously possessing themselves or competing for the same. They have already taken many precautions, and if they thought that another European force was about to arrive they would take further steps, and, from the fact of their already having a footing in the land, might probably derive greater advantages, unless prompt and cautious measures were taken.

The Resources of Syria.

As to the resources of Syria, such as would be of use for a military occupation, little or nothing can be obtained. In the portion over which the occupation would extend, nothing has been considered but the growth of the mulberry-tree and vine, and these have only been got to grow by forming terraces on the hill-sides. The plains are uncultivated, for the most part, and are only fed upon by the flocks of goats which come down there for that purpose from the mountains. The little barley and corn that here and there is grown does not suffice the population, who have to provide themselves with additional supplies from the seaport towns. Barley, flour, and straw can, however, be obtained from the fertile plains of Antioch, Homs, and Hamah, which are exported from Iskanderoon in large vessels, and from Suweidiyeh in smaller ones. Not a blade of grass grows over the land. With the exception of fuel, in the form of wood, nothing but the above-named articles can be obtained.

Merchants have latterly been importing to Beyrout large supplies of barley, which they dispose of to the muleteers as they return and go up to the troops with their loads.

The French troops have supplied themselves with all their requirements from France, and have already more landed than will supply their troops for nine months.

In the shipment of provisions, which, on landing, have to be carried inland on beasts of burden, it is of all things important that the packages, barrels, or cases in which they are packed be of a convenient size for being so transported, and that their weight does not exceed 125 lbs. each, so that two can be strung on a mule.

The coffee used by the French troops is already roasted.

The following are the daily rations of a French soldier in these climates. I am unable to put them into English corresponding weights, having no comparative tables with me:—

16 grammes coffee; 21 grammes sugar; 60 grammes rice; grammes salt; 250 grammes meat and 40 grammes pork (salt), or 300 grammes meat; 750 grammes bread; 26 centilitres of wine, or 6 centilitres 25 millilitres of brandy.

Every ten men are formed into a mess, and use the utensils specified in the annexed list of a French soldier's campaign equipment.

I have endeavoured in the above Memoranda to note a few of those things which it is important should be considered in the event of sending a British force to this country.

Well equipped in some things as the English army may be, it has not the daily habit of a camp life, as the French army has in Algeria, where it seems to have taught itself, under nearly a similar climate to Syria, the use of all those things which constitute its comfort.

(Signed)

EDWYN S. BURNABY,

Beyrout, October 5, 1860.

Lieutenant-Colonel.

THE following is a complete list of what is carried by the French Infantry soldier in Syria:—

The Clothing worn by the Soldier.—A forage cap and peak; a white curtain of cotton, with two strings to tie in front; this protects the back of head and nape of the neck. A merino neck-handkerchief; a flannel vest; a pair of flannel drawers; a cotton shirt; a shell jacket, or a long coat, double-breasted, coming below the knee, the flaps of which button back to allow freedom of movement on the march. Neither of these garments button tightly. Two cloth loops at the side exist by which the sword and ammunition waist-belt is supported, which enables a portion of its weight to be thrown from the waist. A pair of loose cloth trousers, plaited in folds into their waistband, which allows freedom of the hips. A woollen scarf about two feet wide, which being folded lengthwise in four, is wound three times round the waist. A pair of buff-coloured shoes, greased. No stockings, but a canvas gaiter with two rows of buttons; the one button under the trouser close to the leg, the other to allow the trousers to be worn inside, and thus be raised to fall over the gaiter, and give freedom to the knee as a knickerbocker.

Arms, Accoutrements, and Ammunition.—A rifle and sling; a very broad waistbelt, supported by two loops on the coat; a sword bayonet, supported by a frog to the belt, with steel scabbard; a pouch, in which is never carried more than fourteen cartridges, the remaining forty-six being carried on the back in a knapsack. The knapsack, which is of natural cow-hide, is furnished with straps towards the bottom of its side, to enable a *tente d'abri*, or a blanket which is folded lengthwise, to be fastened round sides, as well as the top of the knapsack. The straps that are at the back are of extreme length to allow the large tin cooking utensils, or even a good-sized faggot of wood, to be carried at the back.

The Contents of the Knapsack.—One flannel vest; one pair flannel drawers; one cotton shirt; one pair canvass gaiters; one pair buff shoes; one pot of grease; forty-six cartridges; one spoon (knife carried in pocket); one nipple-wrench and picker; one brush; one piece of soap; no towel, but two or three pocket-handkerchiefs; one pair canvas trousers. Space remains for such provisions as coffee, salt, sugar, and rice, which are carried in small cotton bags.

On the Knapsack is attached—A *tente d'abri*, its buttons so adjusted that four will form a complete tent, or any number of pieces buttoned together will form a large awning; or that if one is folded in two and buttoned, it can be stuffed with straw and make a mattress. A pole in two pieces; two tent-pegs; a piece of whip-cord, which fastens the pole and pegs together when carried, and which acts as a stay to the tent when pitched. A mess-tin and cover; a blanket, which forms a hood when the shell-jacket is worn, or a great-coat with a hood when the long coat is worn.

Cooking Utensils and Provisions, divided and carried amongst every ten Men.—The bidon, or tin water-can; the marmite, or mess-kettle, the cover of which forms a frying-pan; the gamelle, or a large block-tin basin, used for frying and baking; a coffee-grinder; an iron soup ladle; a long cotton bag, capable of containing eight days' rations of coffee for ten men; ditto for sugar; ditto for rice; ditto for salt. Bread and biscuit are seldom carried for more than three days by the soldier, each naturally carrying his own.

The Water-bottle and Drinking-cup.—A tin water-bottle, worn at the side, and supported over the shoulders by a strap; it is covered with cloth which, if wetted, by exposure to the sun evaporates, and causes the water to cool. A tin drinking-cup.

(Signed)

EDWYN S. BURNABY,
Lieutenant-Colonel.

Syria 1860.

Inclosure 4 in No. 205.

Memorandum by Mr. Graham.

THE plain of the Hauran is about 2,400 feet above the level of the Mediterranean. It forms a portion of that great plateau which stretches almost without interruption from the Jordan Valley eastwards to the Euphrates. On this glorious plain, which if cultivated might produce corn enough to make it the granary of the whole world, scarcely a stone is to be found except in certain districts where the red sandstone formation is interrupted by a jet of basalt. The most remarkable instances of these interruptions of the plain are in the Ledjah and Safah, both volcanic formations—volcanic islands I should rather call them, which rise abruptly from the plain, and with a jagged and definite outline stand alone and isolated in the vast tract, which forms geographically the northern province of Arabia. These basaltic islands are rift into fissures so broad and so long that one may follow them up for miles before they can be crossed, while in some places the hard rocks hang like walls on either side of you. The Ledjah is about thirty miles in length, that is, from north to south; and a mean of sixteen miles in breadth, that is, from east to west.

East again of this is the Jebel Hauran, a chain of mountains which actually forms the eastern limit of the Hauran; in fact, the eastern barrier of the Druse country. The highest peak in this chain is 6,000 feet high, and in winter the summit is covered with snow. I have already said that the plain of the Hauran is 2,400 feet above the seaboard; and when the winter winds blow, the climate is of course cold, but always dry and healthy, and with proper precaution would not be found too cold. In winter, snow falls on the plain, but rarely lies, and I doubt if the thermometer is often as low as 25° Fahrenheit; but I have never been in the Hauran in winter, nor has any European that I know of, and I judge chiefly from analogy by comparing it with the climate of Damascus, which cannot be much different. I have been enabled, however, to ascertain a good deal about the climate of the Hauran from the Arabs of the Desert who frequent that region, and they have assured me that there is not very much rain in the winter, and the climate is not very cold; and their testimony is good. On the whole, I suppose the climate of the Hauran in winter to be nearly the same as that of the Plain of Damascus, which never is very trying.

The ancient cities which still remain almost uninjured would afford excellent shelter to the troops in winter during the heaviest rains, when they would be most exposed in tents, and wood and brushwood is to be found in great quantities, both in the Ledjah and in the oak forest on the Jebel Hauran. On the whole for a winter campaign, with proper provision against rain and cold, the Hauran would be as healthy a country as any in the world, and the facilities of transport from the sea would enable the troops, if they were sent there, to be supplied with all kinds of stores with the greatest facility. It should, however, be carefully kept in mind that in sending them to the plain of the Desert of Syria, they are not going to a burning Sahara, but, until March, to a bracing and windy climate, where great-coats and warm things will be absolutely necessary. If they be well supplied in these respects the winter will not only be tolerable, but, I trust, healthy. I believe that the mean number of rainy days in winter amounts to twenty, nor are all of these days of incessant rain.

There are several springs in the mountains, but of course in winter there would be no scarcity of water, since the tanks which abound in all that district catch the water from the early November rains, and this lasts a long time.

Inclosure 5 in No. 205.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, October 1, 1860.

WITH reference to your Excellency's despatch of the 11th ultimo, I have the satisfaction to state that I have good reason to believe that, with one exception, every woman or child abducted by the Moslems of Damascus during the late disturbances have been restored to their friends. After instituting the most searching inquiries among the various Christian sects in that city, I can discover but one individual to be missing, a little girl named Wardeh, the daughter of a certain Hannah-esh-Shus, a Maronite, from Deir-el-Kamar, who has himself unfortunately perished at the time of the outbreak. This child was a servant in the house of a Christian named Makhail-es-Summale. When the massacre began she escaped to the house of a Moslem called Ahmed Agha, who states, that wishing to save her, he conducted her to the gate of the citadel and left her there, but she has never been heard of since.

The principal priest of the Greek Catholics and some persons of that Communion think it possible that some of their women may remain secluded in villages near Damascus, but as they cannot give the name of any missing individual it is to be trusted that the conjecture is unfounded.

The lady to whom I alluded in my despatch of the 8th ultimo has also been good enough to make the most diligent inquiries among her Moslem friends, and she is decidedly of opinion from what she has learned that in consequence of the severe penalties denounced by Fuad Pasha against this species of crime, all those who had carried off Christian women or children have long since given them up.

It is certainly possible that a family may have so utterly perished as that none of the elder members of it have survived to claim those whose youth or beauty may have preserved them from sharing the fate of their relations; but as far as I have been able to ascertain, so extreme a calamity can have scarcely overtaken any one house.

Having, therefore, caused inquiry to be made of the head of each individual family at Damascus whether any member of it who is not known to have perished in the massacre may be still missing, and being unable to discover the name of but one person, I think I may be justified in assuring your Excellency that but one individual, if she indeed survives, is still in the power of the Moslem. In consequence of the fruitless endeavours by her relations and the Consuls, I am afraid the recovery of this poor little creature will be impossible.

But one other consideration may diminish the satisfaction with which I make this announcement to your Excellency: it is just possible that some mother may have sought to conceal a loss which they would consider could never be repaired, except by discovering the dishonour it entailed.

A similar method of investigation is being applied to the refugees from Damascus at present at Beyrout, I only hope to be followed by the same results.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 6 in No. 205.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, October 5, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that this morning Abro Effendi called upon me, for the purpose of communicating a despatch he had just received from his Excellency Fuad Pasha.

According to the terms of this document, it would appear that Fuad Pasha, on quitting Sayda, marched, unopposed, across the Lebanon and the Plain of the Bekâa, the majority of the Druse nation having deter-

mined to remain submissively in their villages, and await the award of the Government.

On arriving at Hasbeya, his Excellency made some ineffectual attempts to surround and make prisoners of a considerable body of refugee Druse Sheiks and their adherents, who had taken refuge among the glens and fortresses of Jebel-esh-Sheikh; but having ascertained that these persons had eluded his grasp, and crossed over to the eastern side of the Mountain, Fuad Pasha contented himself with leaving the matter in the hands of the Seraskier of Damascus, and the officers in command of the troops at Saosa, while he himself returned to the Lebanon.

There is little doubt but that, in consequence of the inefficient disposition of their troops by the Turkish Commanders, all those fugitives will probably succeed in slipping to the Hauran. Indeed, so ineffectual have been the endeavours made to intercept them, that it might not be an improbable conjecture to suppose that the Turkish authorities had been desirous rather to favour than to hinder their escape.

On his return, Fuad Pasha met the French General at Jubb Jenin in the Bekâa, to which place the French column had descended, having marched from Beyrout in a direction parallel to the Turkish advance from Sayda.

Having explained to M. de Beaufort that adequate means had been already taken to disperse or capture the rebels still remaining in arms along the eastern slopes of Jebel-esh-Sheikh, Fuad Pasha invited M. de Beaufort to reascend the Lebanon with him—a requisition the French General has, I understand, very unwillingly complied with, and is at this moment in the neighbourhood of Zahleh; Fuad Pasha having fixed his own head-quarters at Mokhtarrah.

I am happy to be able to state that both at Zahleh and at Deir-el-Kamar the French troops are doing their utmost to assist the Christian inhabitants to rebuild their ruined houses.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 7 in No. 205.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, October 7, 1860.

I REGRET to have to inform your Excellency that I have received too indisputable confirmation of the statement I had the honour of conveying to you in my despatch to Lord John Russell of the 29th ultimo, relative to the atrocities committed by certain of the Christians who accompanied the French column on its march to Deir-el-Kamar and the Bekâa.

The following is an authentic list of unarmed and inoffensive persons who, it is certain, have been wantonly murdered. Many other deeds of a similar nature are said to have taken place; but I have confined myself to mentioning those only in proof of which trustworthy evidence has been adduced. Unprejudiced persons seem to think that about twenty persons have been killed in this abominable manner.

September 25.—An old blind bed-ridden Druse murdered at Aineh. Two other persons killed at same place.

September 27.—An old Druse woman, who had applied to a French guard for protection, which was refused her, first stoned by Christian boys, and finally killed by a Christian woman.

The perpetrator of this act of atrocity had followed a French regiment to whom she attached herself from Beyrout. It gives me pain to be obliged to add that, far from being punished for her crime, she is still encouraged by the officers and men to accompany the regiment with whom she lives.

September 29.—A man murdered.

September 30.—A man murdered; his body brought into the French camp. A Druse woman at the village of Nabrukh cruelly set upon and

outraged by a number of men. If she survives the injuries she has sustained, which is doubtful, it will be solely owing to the interposition of Colonel Burnaby, who arrived on the spot just as a man was about to thrust her through with his yataghan.

At the same place a Druse woman had already been killed before Colonel Burnaby could interfere, that officer having only arrived in time to prevent her murderers from thrusting a stake up her body in a manner as indecent as it was barbarous.

On this occasion, a Christian man who had attempted to defend this woman was also murdered.

A Druse killed at the village of Keferaya, in the presence of the French troops.

In addition to this list of murders, I might enumerate many instances of rape, pillage, and wanton destruction of property by the Christians, and even by the French troops; but such disorders, I am afraid, are but too inevitable a consequence of the march of an ill-disposed army through a disorganized country.

Nowhere did either the French or Turkish troops encounter the slightest opposition.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

P.S.—Immediately after receiving information of the above deplorable events, Lord Dufferin communicated with M. Bécclard three different times, and urged upon him the propriety of his inviting M. de Beaufort to take the most stringent measures to put an end to these atrocities, to punish their authors, and furthermore to issue a notification, or an order of the day, assuring safety to all Druses remaining unarmed in their villages, especially to the women and children. M. Bécclard was good enough to promise that he would request the General to adopt these steps, but it is to be feared that M. de Beaufort has not paid any great attention to this requisition. Lord Dufferin also requested Mr. Noel Moore to proceed immediately to Mokhtarah, the present head-quarters of his Excellency Fuad Pasha, urging him to take some steps towards putting an end to the continuation of these barbarities.

An exaggerated rumour that the French have put to death all the women and children has reached the Haurân, and will render the difficulty of dealing with the Druse refugees more complicated.

Mr. Meade has just returned from Deir-el-Kamar, to which place he had gone on the 3rd instant. He learned at Ateieh, where an American mission is established, that on the 27th ultimo ten Druses were murdered at the small village of Kefr Katra, about a mile from the line of march to Deir-el-Kamar, in the valley of the Damûr.

The murderers were Christian inhabitants of Deir-el-Kamar, and two of their victims had taken an active part in the massacre and destruction of that place, having been heard to boast that they had shot nine Christians through the head.

Mr. Meade was furnished by the American Missionary with the names of the murdered men. He also stated that the only Druse saved was the chief man of the village, named Hamûd Mahmûd, who was spared in consideration of his having been the means of preserving the life of an active Maronite partizan of Deir-el-Kamar, named Ghendâr Bek.

In consequence of indisposition, Lord Dufferin has requested Mr. Meade to subjoin the above postscript.

(Signed) ROBERT H. MEADE.

No. 206.

Lord J. Russell to Lord Dufferin.

(No. 18.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, October 20, 1860.

WITH reference to your Lordship's report to Sir Henry Bulwer of the 29th of September, and to your despatch to me No. 15 of the

same date, I have to state to you that Her Majesty's Government feel the greatest indignation at the murders committed by Maronite followers of the French army.

The French Commander should arrest the murderers and send them to be tried at Beyrout.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 207.

Count Cavour to the Marquis d'Azeglio.—(Communicated to Lord J. Russell by the Marquis d'Azeglio, October .)

M. le Marquis,

Turin, le 15 Octobre, 1860.

VOUS connaissez par mes communications précédentes l'attitude que le Gouvernement du Roi a cru devoir prendre dans la question de la Syrie.

Lorsqu'au mois d'Août dernier, à l'annonce des massacres qui ensanglantaient les régions Chrétiennes de ce pays, les Puissances se réunirent en Conférence à Paris pour aviser aux moyens de mettre fin à ces désordres affreux et d'en empêcher le renouvellement, nous avons réclamé de prendre part aux accords qui devaient avoir lieu.

Notre droit était évident. Il était consacré par l'Article VII du Traité du 30 Mars, 1856, qui en admettant la Sublime Porte aux avantages du droit public et du concert Européen, contient l'engagement formel des Puissances signataires de garantir, en commun, l'indépendance et l'intégrité territoriale de l'Empire Ottoman.

En vertu de cette disposition, l'assentiment de la Sardaigne à l'occupation d'une partie du territoire Ottoman était indispensable à la légalité des mesures qui devaient être prises en commun.

Aussi le droit de la Sardaigne n'a pas été contesté. Seulement on nous a fait remarquer plutôt comme un doute que comme une véritable objection que la question de la Syrie, telle qu'elle venait d'être posée, se rattachait aux arrangements de 1845, arrangements auxquels nous avions été étrangers, et que dès lors on pouvait croire que les Puissances agissaient en cette occasion moins en vertu du Traité de 1856 qu'en conséquence d'accords antérieurs.

Il nous a été facile de démontrer que la question ne pouvait être considérée comme simplement locale mais qu'elle avait un intérêt général par l'influence qu'elle devait exercer sur la situation de la Turquie et les relations entre les différents Etats de l'Europe.

Nous aurions même pu ajouter que sans revenir sur les Conventions de 1845, qui ont trait au Mont Liban, le Traité de 1856, en introduisant un droit nouveau envers la Turquie, a modifié explicitement toutes les Conventions particulières qui seraient contraires ou non conformes à ce nouveau droit général et permanent.

Néanmoins nous ne pouvions ignorer que les obstacles qui s'opposaient pour le moment à l'accueil de nos demandes étaient dus surtout aux efforts de l'Autriche pour nous exclure des accords. Il s'agissait alors de la vie de milliers de Chrétiens qui couraient les plus grands dangers. Il s'agissait d'apporter un remède prompt et efficace à un état de choses épouvantable. La question d'humanité primait la question politique. Nous avons cru ne devoir pas insister davantage, car nos instances auraient pu être cause de quelques retards dans les décisions de la Conférence de Paris, et tout retard aurait pu entraîner les conséquences les plus funestes. Nous avons donc préféré suspendre pour le moment l'exercice de notre droit, mais nous avons en même temps fait nos réserves auprès des Cabinets amis et alliés.

De son côté la Sublime Porte dans le courant du mois de Juin ayant confié à son Altesse le Grand Visir Kuprisli Pacha la mission de visiter les différentes provinces de l'Empire pour s'enquérir du sort des populations Chrétiennes, s'était empressée de donner connaissance officielle de cette

mesure aux Représentants des Puissances signataires du Traité de Paris résidents à Constantinople.

La Légation de Sa Majesté n'ayant pas reçu cette communication, le Ministre du Roi demanda des explications, et alors des doutes furent exprimés verbalement par la poste sur la légitimité de nos réclamations.

J'ai donné ordre immédiatement à M. le Général Durando de répondre catégoriquement aux observations qu'on venait de déduire, et de protester d'avance et formellement contre toute interprétation restrictive de nos droits.

J'ai l'honneur de vous transmettre copie de la note que le Ministre de Sa Majesté a adressé dans ce but à son Excellence Safvet Effendi le 22 Septembre dernier, et je vous prie d'en donner lecture et d'en laisser copie à son Excellence le Ministre des Affaires Etrangères de Sa Majesté Britannique.

Agréez, &c.
(Signé) C. CAVOUR.

Inclosure in No. 207.

General Durando to Safvet Effendi.

22 Septembre, 1860.

LES doutes exprimés verbalement par votre Excellence, par son Altesse Aali Pacha, et par son Excellence Fuad Pacha, sur la légitimité des réclamations consignées dans ma note du 27 Juin relative à l'enquête de son Altesse Kuprisli Pacha, et le retard mis par votre Excellence à y répondre catégoriquement, me placent dans la nécessité de me prévaloir de la réserve expressément faite de traiter au fond la question dans le cas où elle fût soulevée.

Or cette question peut être formulée de la manière suivante :—

1. Le Traité de Paris de 1856 a-t-il entendu que le règlement des conditions des Chrétiens de l'Empire Ottoman fût complètement en dehors de l'action diplomatique des Puissances signataires ?

2. La Sublime Porte est-elle fondée en droit lorsqu'elle refuse à la Sardaigne cette ingérence qui lui revient au même titre qu'aux autres Puissances signataires du Traité ?

Voici les dispositions de l'Article IX :—

“Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan dans sa constante sollicitude pour le bien-être de ses sujets ayant octroyé un firman qui en améliorant leur sort sans distinction de religion ni de races, consacre ses généreuses intentions envers les populations Chrétiennes de son Empire, et voulant donner un nouveau témoignage de ses sentiments à cet égard, a résolu de communiquer aux Puissances Contractantes le dit firman spontanément émané de sa volonté souveraine. Les Puissances Contractantes constatant la haute valeur de cette communication. Il est bien entendu qu'elle ne saurait, en aucun cas, donner aux dites Puissances le droit de s'immiscer, soit collectivement, soit séparément, dans les rapports de Sa Majesté le Sultan avec ses sujets, ni dans l'administration intérieure de son Empire.”

Quelle est donc la signification politique d'une si grave communication faite aux Puissances avec tant de solennité ? Est-elle une simple formalité ? Est-elle une notification superflue d'un événement déjà très connu en Europe ? Cette supposition n'est pas admissible ; elle blesse la dignité des Hautes Puissances qui reçurent cette communication, aussi bien que la bonne foi de la Sublime Porte elle-même qui en prit l'initiative. Elle doit avoir nécessairement un autre caractère et une autre signification. Sans doute elle ne saurait donner aux Puissances le droit de s'immiscer dans les rapports particuliers et journaliers de Sa Majesté le Sultan avec ses sujets, car les Puissances qui s'étaient opposées aux exigences de la Russie tendant à obtenir la protection exclusive des Chrétiens de l'Empire, se seraient mises en contradiction avec elles-mêmes par cette substitution collective, qui dans le fait n'aurait pas été autre chose que l'annulation de la souveraineté du Sultan sur une population

de 12,000,000 de ses sujets. Le Traité de Paris a évité cet écueil : mais tout en s'interdisant cette ingérence permanente et journalière entre le Sultan et ses sujets Chrétiens, les Puissances Contractantes ne se sont pas moins réservé la haute surveillance, non sur les Chrétiens pris comme individus et sujets dans le sens administratif, mais sur la société générale des Chrétiens de l'Empire, considérée collectivement, et dans un sens politique, et dont les conditions générales intéressaient au plus haute degré les Puissances de l'Europe.

La Turquie d'une part, en donnant connaissance à l'Europe de ses dispositions bienveillantes envers les Chrétiens de l'Empire, et en y joignant des grandes et solennelles promesses, contractait en même temps le devoir, non seulement de remplir ses engagements, mais de mettre les Puissances à même d'apprécier les moyens qu'elle emploierait pour atteindre ce but, et le résultat qu'elle en obtiendrait.

C'est sans doute en partant de ce point de vue que la Sublime Porte, avec une parfaite opportunité, ordonna l'enquête sur le sort des Chrétiens confiée à son Altesse le Grand Visir, et qu'elle s'empressa de donner communication de cet acte important aux Représentants des Puissances par sa note circulaire du 2 Juin. D'autre part les Puissances qui constataient au sein du Congrès de Paris la haute valeur de la communication de la Sublime Porte ont acquis le droit de lui rappeler ses engagements solennels, et de l'avertir du danger que leur inexécution pourrait causer à l'Empire et à la tranquillité de l'Europe. Et c'est également en se plaçant au même point de vue que le Cabinet de St. Pétersbourg n'hésita point au mois d'Avril dernier à signaler aux Puissances l'état dangereux des Chrétiens de l'Empire, comme un élément de graves perturbations et d'éventualités désastreuses qu'il était urgent de détourner. Voilà à mon avis le caractère et la portée de la disposition précitée.

L'Article IX par conséquent fixe les droits et les devoirs réciproques, au sujet du sort des Chrétiens, entre la Sublime Porte et les Puissances Contractantes, dans une mesure de surveillance et de contrôle dont la nécessité ne saurait être méconnue par personne.

Interprété de tout autre manière cet Article ne serait plus qu'une disposition vide de sens et peu digne de trouver la place importante qu'elle occupe dans le Traité de Paris. Ce droit de surveillance et de contrôle attribué par le Traité de Paris aux Puissances signataires qui, à mon avis, ressort très clairement du contenu et de la portée de l'Article IX, est mis hors de contestation et pleinement consacré par l'Article VII, qui résume en peu de mots tout l'esprit du Traité. Selon ses dispositions, “la Sublime Porte est admise aux avantages du droit public et du concert Européen, les Puissances s'engagent, chacune de son côté, à respecter l'indépendance et l'intégrité territoriale de l'Empire Ottoman, garantissent en commun la stricte observation de cet engagement et considéreront en conséquence tout acte de nature à y apporter atteinte, comme une question d'intérêt général.”

Voici la condition de garantie clairement établie.

Or cette condition, en même temps qu'elle impose aux Etats garants des devoirs et des charges, elle leur confère également certains droits sur l'Etat garanti. Si le Gouvernement Ottoman vient à provoquer par des mesures désastreuses l'esprit de révolte parmi les populations Chrétiennes, les Etats garants ont le droit de l'avertir du danger qu'il court, et de lui indiquer les moyens de prévenir des éventualités dont les conséquences pèseraient tout autant sur la Turquie que sur eux mêmes. Ce ne serait pas s'immiscer dans les rapports individuels des sujets Chrétiens avec le Sultan, ce à quoi s'oppose la disposition de l'Article IX du Traité ; ce ne serait qu'exercer une ingérence inséparable de toute garantie, telle que le droit de rémontrance, dans le cas où l'Etat garanti viendrait par sa faute à compromettre l'intégrité de son indépendance politique et territoriale, qui forme l'objet de la garantie.

La Sublime Porte dans le fait n'a jamais contesté aux Puissances garantes cette haute surveillance, cette espèce de contrôle, non seulement pour ce qui a trait aux Chrétiens, mais souvent même pour ce qui touche à l'administration intérieure de l'Empire. Je pourrais citer plusieurs exemples dont je fus témoin et partie. Je me bornerai uniquement à

rappeler à votre Excellence le fait de la réintégration de son Altesse Mehemet Ali Pacha, beau-frère de Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan, au Ministère de la Marine, qui eut lieu au mois d'Octobre 1858. Les Représentants des Puissances signataires du Traité de Paris à Constantinople, persuadés que cette nomination pouvait mettre en suspicion les dispositions de Sa Majesté le Sultan relativement aux réformes économiques projetées et compromettre son crédit financier à l'extérieur, firent simultanément des vives remontrances à cet égard.

La Sublime Porte, dans cette circonstance, où se trouvait en jeu non seulement son administration intérieure, mais, on pourrait dire aussi, la dignité personnelle du Sultan, n'hésita pas à donner des explications et des justifications à tous les Représentants, y compris celui de la Sardaigne. Après une consécration si évidente de ses droits pourrait-on raisonnablement lui contester celui de participer aux actes qui ont trait à l'immense et vitale question des Chrétiens de l'Empire ?

Pourquoi donc la Sublime Porte ne s'est-elle point prévalue des dispositions de l'Article IX, pour se dispenser de toute explication concernant une question si délicate et qui touchait en quelque sorte à l'honneur d'un conjoint de Sa Majesté le Sultan ?

Evidemment c'est que la condition de garantie consignée à l'Article VII consacre en faveur des Puissances garantes un droit de contrôle, dont elles, je me plais à le constater, n'ont fait et ne doivent faire qu'un usage très modéré.

On peut nous objecter, si la Sardaigne avait les droits qu'elle réclame, pour s'ingérer dans la question des Chrétiens, pourquoi ne les a-t-elle pas fait prévaloir dans les conférences des cinq Puissances principales de l'Europe tenues à St. Pétersbourg au mois d'Avril dernier ? Pourquoi tout récemment n'a-t-elle point pris part aux conférences qui ont réglé à Paris, par le Protocole du 4 Août, l'occupation armée de la Syrie ?

Le Gouvernement du Roi n'a pas manqué en temps opportun de faire ses réclamations. Je pourrais ajouter que la Turquie ne saurait invoquer les antécédents ayant trait à une autre Puissance dont la manière de voir et de juger la portée du Traité de Paris pourrait différer de celle de la Sardaigne et de la Turquie.

L'appréciation, à mon avis, erronée du Cabinet de St. Pétersbourg ne peut servir d'une manière absolue de règle à la conduite d'une autre Puissance, beaucoup moins à la Turquie, dont les rapports avec la Sardaigne lors des événements qui donnèrent lieu au Traité de Paris étaient d'une nature bien différente.

Chaque Etat doit remplir ses engagements indépendamment des appréciations des autres Etats, quand même ils seraient liés par les mêmes stipulations; car chaque Etat a des devoirs spéciaux à remplir dans l'ordre moral autant que dans l'ordre politique. Cela pour ce qui touche aux conférences de St. Pétersbourg.

Pour ce qui a trait à l'occupation de la Syrie, événement qui se rattache directement aux dispositions et aux garanties stipulées dans l'Article VII précité, nul doute que l'assentiment de la Sardaigne à un acte aussi important, tel que l'occupation d'une partie du territoire Ottoman par des troupes étrangères, ne fût une condition indispensable pour sa pleine validité légale.

La question n'est pas seulement locale, comme on a voulu l'entendre, et comme le serait une simple rectification de frontières, ou tout autre acte de ce genre, sur lesquels la Sardaigne ne demande pas l'exercice rigoureux de son droit.

Cette occupation étrangère est une question d'intérêt général. Quant aux accords et aux Conventions antérieures relatives aux Druses et aux Maronites qu'on pourrait invoquer pour demander l'exclusion de la Sardaigne, je me borne à remarquer que le Traité de Paris a établi un droit nouveau général et permanent, auquel doivent se co-ordonner et selon lequel doivent se modifier les Conventions antérieures en tout ce qui pourrait contredire à ses dispositions fondamentales. Si l'Egypte se soulevait et menaçait, comme en 1839, l'intégrité de l'Empire Ottoman, pourrait-on contester à la Sardaigne le droit de prendre part aux délibérations diplomatiques sous prétexte qu'elle n'est pas intervenue aux arrange-

ments de 1840 ? D'ailleurs cette occupation n'a point été motivée uniquement par la guerre avilie entre les Druses et les Maronites, mais elle le fut spécialement par suite des épouvantables catastrophes de Damas, dont la population n'a pas été le sujet des Conventions de 1845, qui concernaient exclusivement le Mont Liban. L'enquête Européenne qui va s'ouvrir incessamment en Syrie, et la révision de la Convention de 1845, qui la suivra nécessairement, ne peuvent aucunement rester enfermées dans les limites du Mont Liban, mais elles doivent pourvoir à la sécurité des Chrétiens dans toute la Syrie.

Je pourrais de mon côté demander à la Porte, pourquoi lorsqu'il s'agissait d'un acte aussi grave que celui de l'occupation du territoire Ottoman par une armée étrangère et pour lequel l'assentiment unanime des sept Puissances signataires devait être nécessairement requis, si l'on tient à la stricte exécution de l'Article VII du Traité de Paris, son Ambassadeur à Paris n'a point réclamé l'intervention de la Sardaigne ? Mais je ne m'en plains pas. Je présume que son Excellence Ahmed Vefik Effendi a été inspiré dans cette occasion par les mêmes sentiments d'humanité que le Gouvernement du Roi mon auguste Souverain a lui-même vivement éprouvés. Dans un moment où le seul retard de vingt-quatre heures apporté à la signature du Protocole pouvait coûter la vie à des milliers de Chrétiens, la Sardaigne, tout en faisant ses réserves pour l'avenir, dans la crainte que ses réclamations pussent soulever quelques objections et donner lieu à quelque retard à la conclusion des négociations, a préféré suspendre pour le moment l'exercice de ses droits devant la gravité des circonstances et l'imminence d'éventualités fâcheuses.

Nous ne doutons point que l'Europe saura nous tenir compte de notre modération et de notre réserve, qui n'est point une abdication, et saura apprécier la nature des sentiments qui ont dicté notre conduite.

Encore une dernière objection. Les traditions et les usages diplomatiques ont réservé exclusivement aux cinq Grandes Puissances l'examen des questions d'un intérêt général Européen; voilà, dit-on, pourquoi la Sardaigne n'a point été appelée à prendre part aux Conférences tenues au mois d'Avril à St. Pétersbourg au sujet de la condition des sujets Chrétiens de l'Empire Ottoman; voilà aussi pourquoi la Sublime Porte ne se croit point obligée de faire droit aux remontrances de la Légation de Sardaigne relativement à l'enquête dont a été chargé son Altesse le Grand Vizir sur le même sujet; voilà, enfin, pourquoi la Sardaigne n'a pas été invitée à prendre part aux délibérations qui ont précédé la signature des Protocoles de Paris du 4 Août, pour régler l'occupation de la Syrie. Ces arguments peuvent à mon avis expliquer mais non justifier la conduite de la Sublime Porte. Quelle que soit l'importance qu'on veuille encore attacher aux vieilles traditions et usages diplomatiques, ceux-ci ne sauraient avoir plus de valeur que les lois écrites. Les Conventions internationales et le droit positif l'emportent sur les traditions et sur les usages. L'exemple d'un puissant et noble pays signataire du Traité de Vienne de 1815, et qui, à notre grande joie, reprend aujourd'hui dans l'opinion générale sa place historique, bien qu'encore repoussé dans les Protocoles de la diplomatie, nous apprend qu'il est fort imprudent de laisser établir de mauvais précédents et ouvrir l'accès à l'établissement d'un principe dangereux, c'est-à-dire, à la prescription en fait de droit international, théorie toute nouvelle que nous ne saurions admettre.

A part ces considérations, puisées dans un ordre général d'idées, on peut se demander si la Turquie a le droit d'invoquer à son appui les vieilles traditions diplomatiques et de s'en faire une arme contre la Sardaigne.

Assurément non. La Turquie n'a été admise à jouir des avantages du droit public Européen que le 30 Mars, 1856. Elle ne peut pas invoquer des droits et des usages antécédents, auxquels elle a toujours été étrangère.

Nous croyons que c'est uniquement sous l'influence des souvenirs de la guerre de Crimée, où la Sardaigne fut son alliée sincère et désintéressée, que la Turquie doit régler désormais sa conduite envers elle, et que dans le Traité de Paris seulement et non ailleurs elle doit puiser le système de ses rapports diplomatiques envers son ancienne alliée.

J'ai eu l'honneur, M. le Ministre, de vous exposer jusqu'ici les considérations qui ont inspiré ma note du 27 Juin, lorsque je me plaignis d'avoir été exclu des notifications officielles faites aux autres Puissances co-signataires du Traité de Paris au sujet de l'enquête sur les conditions générales des Chrétiens de l'Empire; j'espère que la Sublime Porte saura les apprécier.

Dans tous les cas et au nom du Gouvernement du Roi mon auguste Souverain, je dois formellement protester d'avance contre l'interprétation restrictive que le Gouvernement Ottoman ferait à l'avenir des dispositions du Traité de Paris sur cette matière, et je fais à cet égard les plus amples et les plus formelles réserves.

Tout en formulant cette déclaration je m'empresse d'ajouter que je n'ai autre chose en vue que de sauvegarder les principes et nos droits. Mes efforts tendent uniquement à fixer d'une manière claire et précise le sens et la portée du Traité de Paris, et éviter ainsi tout sujet de malentendu et de désaccord entre la Sardaigne et la Sublime Porte, avec laquelle nous n'avons jamais cessé de maintenir les meilleurs rapports et dont l'affaiblissement n'entre aucunement ni dans nos intérêts ni dans nos désirs.

Je saisis, &c.

No. 208.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received October 22.)

(No. 1,342.)

My Lord,

Paris, October 20, 1860.

IT would appear, from M. Thouvenel's language, that General Beaufort is not satisfied with Fuad Pasha's proceedings, and that he accuses him of conniving at the escape of several of the Druse Chiefs by the injudicious disposal of the Turkish troops sent to intercept them.

I took this opportunity of mentioning to M. Thouvenel that I had been informed that the Maronites with the French army had committed acts of great atrocity towards the Druses. M. Thouvenel replied that he feared that acts of that nature were still perpetrated by the Maronites and Druses, though General Beaufort declared in his correspondence that the extent of them had been much exaggerated.

I have, &c.

(Signed) COWLEY.

No. 209.

The Secretary to the Admiralty to Mr. Hammond.—(Received October 23.)

Admiralty, October 22, 1860.

Sir,

I AM commanded by my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to send you herewith, for the information of Her Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, a copy of a letter from Vice-Admiral Martin, dated the 7th instant, reporting the arrangements he has made for assembling a squadron at Corfu, and for leaving a force of frigates and smaller vessels on the coast of Syria.

I am, &c.

(Signed) W. G. ROMAINE.

Inclosure in No. 209.

Vice-Admiral Martin to the Secretary to the Admiralty.

My Lord,

"Marlborough," at Beyrout, October 7, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 24th ultimo, directing me to proceed with a squadron to Corfu, leaving on the coast of Syria a sufficient number of frigates and smaller vessels.

2. These orders will be carried out in the following manner:—

Directly the arrangements incidental to the changes can be made I shall put to sea in my flag-ship with the ships named in the margin,* and sending them to Corfu. I shall call at Suda Bay, Candia, from which place I propose taking the "Exmouth" to join the squadron to be assembled at Corfu. The "Scourge," on arrival at Malta from Gibraltar, will be sent to Candia. And as I am instructed that the force to be drawn to Corfu should be as large as may be practicable, I sent orders to Malta for the "London," "Cæsar," "James Watt," and "Orion," to join my flag, so that the squadron will consist of the following ships:— "Marlborough," "Victor Emmanuel," "London," "Cæsar," "James Watt," "Exmouth," "Neptune," "Orion," "Melpomene;" despatch vessels "Assurance" and "Alacrity."

3. The squadron that will be left on the coast of Syria will consist of the ships named in the margin.†

The senior officer, with three ships, will make St. George's Bay (Beyrout), his head-quarters after the 10th November, and the remaining three vessels will make the Island of Ruad their head-quarters, from which points the whole of the ports will be frequently visited, as I hope it will be unnecessary for the vessels to lie at the open roadsteads of the coast.

4. The instructions for the senior officer, as conveyed in your letter under acknowledgment, will be strictly attended to, and I shall take care to make it generally known that while withdrawing from this coast a portion of the force under my orders, Her Majesty's Government will not cease to watch the state of affairs in Syria, and to demand efficient protection for British subjects and interests.

I am, &c.

(Signed) W. F. MARTIN.

No. 210.

Lord Dufferin to Lord J. Russell.—(Received October 25.)

(No. 18.)

My Lord,

Beyrout, October 12, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that I have received information upon which I can rely, that General de Beaufort has written home for reinforcements.

I have, &c.

(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

No. 211.

Lord Dufferin to Lord J. Russell.—(Received October 25.)

(No. 19.)

My Lord,

Beyrout, October 12, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Lordship's information, copies of the *procès-verbaux* of the first and second *séances* of the Syrian Commission, held on the 5th and 9th instant respectively.

I have, &c.

(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

* "Victor Emmanuel," "Neptune," "Assurance," "Alacrity."

† "Doris," "Liffey," "Raccoon," "Greyhound," "Intrepid" (on her way from Naples), "Lapwing."

Protocol of the First Meeting of the Syrian Commission, held at Beyrout, October 5, 1860.

CEJOURD'HUI, cinq Octobre, mil huit cent soixante, à deux heures de l'après-midi, M. de Weckbecker, Commissaire d'Autriche; M. Béclard, Commissaire de France; Lord Dufferin, Commissaire de Grande Bretagne; M. de Rehues, Commissaire de Prusse; M. Novikow, Commissaire de Russie; Abro Efendi, Délégué de son Excellence Fuad Pacha, Commissaire Extraordinaire de la Sublime Porte, se sont réunis chez le Commissaire Français à l'effet de se constituer en Commission conformément à leurs instructions respectives dans le but, (1), de rechercher l'origine et les causes des événements dont la Syrie a été la théâtre, de déterminer la part de responsabilité des Chefs de l'insurrection, ainsi que celle des Agents de l'Administration, et de provoquer la punition des coupables; (2), d'apprécier l'étendue des désastres qui ont frappé les populations Chrétiennes et de combiner les moyens propres à soulager et à indemniser les victimes; (3), de prévenir le retour de semblables calamités et d'assurer l'ordre et la sécurité en Syrie en indiquant les modifications qu'il convient d'apporter à l'organisation actuelle de la Montagne.

La présidence appartenant de droit à Fuad Pacha par suite d'une entente avec les Représentants des cinq Grandes Puissances à Constantinople, il a été décidé à l'unanimité que, en l'absence du Plénipotentiaire Ottoman, chacun des Commissaires exercerait à tour de rôle et par rang d'âge les fonctions de Vice-Président pendant un mois. En suite de cette décision, le fauteuil a été occupé par M. de Weckbecker, Commissaire d'Autriche, qui a déclaré la séance ouverte. Le Président donne lecture de ses instructions, qui sont trouvées identiques à celles des autres Commissaires. Il invite la Commission à porter tout d'abord son attention sur le premier des points énoncés dans les dites instructions, à savoir, la recherche de l'origine et des causes des événements. Des documents en grand nombre étant adressé de tous côtés à chacun des Commissaires, et ces pièces pour la plupart ne différant pas les unes des autres, il propose de les réunir en un seul dépôt pour éviter la perte de temps qui résulterait d'un travail multiple de traductions.

Le Commissaire Prussien propose de continuer la marche suivie jusqu'à présent par Fuad Pacha en réclamant la production des procès-verbaux déjà dressés par les soins des Commissions Locales.

Le Commissaire Français, en répondant à la proposition du Président, dit que plusieurs établissements religieux, tels que ceux des Jésuites, des Lazaristes, et de Père de Terre Sainte, ayant eu à souffrir des meurtres et des dévastations commis dans ces derniers temps les réclamations qui lui sont adressées à ce sujet sont exclusivement de sa compétence et ne peuvent faire partie des archives de la Commission.

Le Commissaire Russe ajoute qu'il en est de même des pièces qui pourraient lui être adressées concernant la ruine du Vice-Consulat de Russie à Damas, le meurtre du drogman Russe, et les faits qui s'y rattachent.

Le Commissaire Prussien rappelle que dans une réunion préparatoire il avait été convenue d'adresser au Plénipotentiaire Ottoman des observations précises sur certains points déterminés.

Le Commissaire Français donne lecture d'une note rédigée par lui à ce sujet et dont copie se trouve annexée au présent procès-verbal. Une copie de la dite note est également remise par lui à Abro Efendi, qui déclare, à cette occasion, n'avoir pas reçu encore les instructions dont il doit être muni par Fuad Pacha, s'engageant d'ailleurs à transmettre au Plénipotentiaire Ottoman la pièce en question.

Abro Efendi se déclare en outre qu'il ne peut considérer cette réunion que comme une séance préparatoire, et qu'il n'accepte qu'à titre officieuse les communications de MM. les Commissaires.

M. Béclard demande si le Colonel Hosni Bek, membre du Tribunal chargé de juger Khurshid Pacha, est le même officier qui commandait la garnison de Baalbek.

Sur la réponse affirmative d'Abro Efendi, qui assure d'ailleurs n'avoir

pas connaissance des antécédents de Hosni Bek, le Commissaire Français fait observer que la présence de cet officier, contre lequel il existe des charges très graves à propos de sa conduite à Baalbek, que sa présence, dit-il, dans le sein du tribunal extraordinaire de Beyrout est au moins étrange.

M. Béclard demande également comment il se fait que le Colonel Nuri Bek n'ait pas été mis en état d'arrestation. Sa participation au désastre de Zahleh motivait cependant cette mesure de rigueur à son égard.

Abro Efendi répond, quant à Hosni Bek, qu'il prendra les renseignements nécessaires, et quant à Nuri Bek que ce dernier se trouve à Beyrout dans l'impossibilité de quitter la ville, et que cette circonstance rend superflu son emprisonnement préventif; que d'ailleurs il sera interrogé à son tour et puni s'il y a lieu. Abro Efendi ajoute qu'il recevra avec reconnaissance toutes les informations que MM. les Commissaires jugeront à propos de lui fournir sur les diverses personnes inculpées.

M. Béclard s'étonne qu'on ait fait une différence en faveur de Nuri Bek, vu que d'après lui la responsabilité des événements pèse également sur chacun des agents de l'autorité, qui tous lui paraissent être en état de suspicion.

Le Commissaire Russe demande des explications sur la faculté laissée à Shakir Pacha de se rendre à Constantinople lors qu'il aurait dû être retenu à Damas, pour y rendre compte de sa conduite: Abro Efendi ayant objecté qu'il n'avait aucune connaissance des griefs élevés contre Shakir Pacha, M. Novikow lui adresse une autre interpellation relativement à Khurshid Pacha, dont le procès avance, tandis qu'il lui était revenu que le tribunal chargé de l'instruction n'a entendu aucun des témoins qui eussent pu l'éclairer.

Abro Efendi répond que l'interrogatoire seul de Khurshid Pacha est terminé, et que quant aux témoignages il eût été bien difficile d'en admettre contre la première autorité de la province.

Le Commissaire Prussien pense que les Druses devraient être interrogés dans le cours de l'enquête sur les actes de Khurshid Pacha qui sont à leur connaissance. Abro Efendi se retranche derrière son manque d'instructions. Le Commissaire Français constate l'opinion répandue dans le public et d'après laquelle on se serait borné à recueillir les réponses de Khurshid Pacha sans faire comparaître aucun témoin. S'il en est ainsi, l'enquête est incomplète. Bien que Khurshid Pacha ait été le premier fonctionnaire de la province, on ne doit pas moins chercher à se procurer sur ses actes tous les éclaircissements nécessaires.

Le Président fait remarquer que tout procès criminel se compose de deux parties bien distinctes — 1, l'instruction; 2, la défense de l'accusé.

A son avis, la Commission n'a pas le droit s'immiscer dans la première partie du procès qui ne regarde que le Gouvernement Ottoman et ne peut intervenir que dans la seconde.

Un débat s'engage à cette occasion sur le droit d'intervention des Commissaires dans l'enquête, mais il y est mis fin par une observation de Lord Dufferin qui rappelle que ce droit a été formellement reconnu à Constantinople.

Le Commissaire Français, et après lui plusieurs autres membres de la Commission, présentent des observations sur le mode suivi par Fuad Pacha pour l'évaluation et la réparation des dommages soufferts par les habitants des villages Chrétiens.

Il résulte des explications données par Abro Efendi que six Comités composés d'hommes spéciaux auxquels sont adjoints des gens de la Montagne, ont été chargés de se transporter sur les lieux chacun dans une localité distincte et de dresser un état des frais que doivent entraîner les réparations les plus urgentes. Ces Comités du dehors sont placés sous le contrôle d'une Commission Centrale de Secours présidée par Abro Efendi. Sur le vu de l'état dressé par les Comités les intéressés reçoivent la somme allouée comme strictement nécessaire pour rendre leur maison habitable, et l'emploi des fonds est l'objet d'une surveillance toute particulière.

On ne s'occupe pas pour le moment des maisons des Emirs, qui sont

les plus coûteuses, et en échange desquelles les propriétaires reçoivent provisoirement à Beyrouth des logements ainsi que des secours proportionnés à leurs besoins.

Il ne s'agit également aujourd'hui que d'assurer aux habitants une assistance momentanée à l'aide des sommes fournies par Sa Majesté le Sultan. Plus tard on s'occupera de la question des indemnités.

Sur la demande de Lord Dufferin, dont la motion subit divers modifications, il est décidé que la Commission se fera représenter par des délégués dans le sein des six Comités dont il vient d'être fait mention. Le mode de cette délégation est indiqué dans un paragraphe ajouté après coup, au troisième point de la note annexée au présent procès-verbal.

Le Commissaire Français critique la composition d'une sorte de tribunal secondaire dont les attributions ne lui paraissent pas clairement définies, que fonctionnent à côté et sous la dépendance du tribunal extraordinaire à Beyrouth. Abro Efendi donne quelques éclaircissements sur la mission confiée à ce prétendu tribunal, qui n'est chargé, à titre de limite d'instruction du Tribunal Extraordinaire, que de l'examen des crimes ou délits commis à la faveur des derniers événements par des individus obscurs. Un seul Chrétien, il est vrai, fait partie de ce tribunal, mais c'est aussi le seul capable qu'on ait pu trouver jusqu'à ce jour.

Le Commissaire Prussien s'élève contre cette assertion, et dit que le choix de cet unique juge Chrétien n'est pas même justifié par l'impartialité de son caractère. Une conversation s'engage entre les membres de la Commission à l'effet de savoir s'il y a lieu de rétribuer, et sur quels fonds, les délégués adjoints par elle aux six Comités de la Montagne.

Lord Dufferin propose de faire appel à la munificence des Gouvernements respectifs : cette proposition n'est pas adoptée.

Le Commissaire Français pense qu'on pourrait cependant se mettre en rapport avec le Comité Européen de Secours établi à Beyrouth et régler de concert avec le Comité le meilleur emploi à faire des sommes qu'il aura à sa disposition. M. Béclard donne ensuite lecture d'une requête qui lui a été adressée par la famille Bedran Tabet de Deir-el-Kamar.

Cette famille se plaint de ce que le Tribunal de Beyrouth lui opposant un principe de la loi Musulmane, ait exigé la nomination d'un procureur légal pour représenter les orphelins mineurs. Il en résultait que jusqu'à leur majorité les dits mineurs seraient privés du droit de poursuivre les assassins de leurs parents.

Abro Efendi s'empresse de déclarer que le principe lui paraît inapplicable à Beyrouth, attendu qu'on ne l'a pas invoqué à Damas.

La séance est levée à cinq heures, et il est décidé que la séance suivante, fixée au Lundi, 8 Octobre, aura lieu chez le Commissaire Anglais, qui a offert de mettre un local spécial à la disposition de la Commission.

(Signé) WECKBECKER, Vice-Président.
L. BECLARD.
DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.
REHFUES.
NOVIKOW.
ABRO.

Annexe.

1. Damas.—La Commission demande communication des dossiers relatifs à la procédure suivie contre les coupables ou accusés ; cette communication dont lui servir à se former une opinion sur la question de savoir s'il y a lieu d'exercer de nouvelles poursuites.

La Commission est d'avis que le désarmement général de la population de Damas est une mesure d'urgence que le Gouvernement ne doit pas hésiter à prendre.

2. Beyrouth.—La Commission demande des éclaircissements sur la nature de l'enquête commencée contre Koorshid Pacha et les autres autorités. Son droit d'intervention dans cette enquête est évident. La Commission est disposée à l'exercer dès à présent soit personnellement,

soit par ses Délégués. Même demande en ce qui concerne l'enquête projetée ou commencée contre les Druses.

3. Les Chrétiens.—Il importe de les faire rentrer chez eux le plus tôt possible. Pour cela il faut d'abord aviser à l'ensevelissement des cadavres et la reconstruction des maisons, puis subvenir aux besoins des nécessiteux, et pourvoir à la sécurité de tous.

L'administration locale ayant déjà chargé six Comités distincts de procéder dans les différents localités à l'évaluation des dommages, la Commission est d'avis de désigner six personnes de son choix qui pourront être adjointes à chacun des six Comités, ou se réunir entre elles de façon à former un Comité distinct. Ces six personnes délégués par la Commission exerceront un contrôle direct sur les actes des Comités auxquels elles seront adjointes.

4. Suppression provisoire de la Caimacmie Druse.—La Commission a besoin de quelques explications sur cette mesure dans le cas même où la nécessité en serait démontrée, attendu qu'aucun changement, même provisoire, dans l'organisation administrative du Liban ne saurait avoir lieu sans la participation ou l'acquiescement des Grandes Puissances.

Inclosure 2 in No. 211.

Protocol of the Second Meeting of the Syrian Commission, held at Beyrouth, October 9, 1860.

CEJOURD'HUI, neuf Octobre, mil huit cent soixante, les Commissaires des cinq Grandes Puissances, et Abro Efendi, délégué de son Excellence Fuad Pacha, Commissaire Extraordinaire de la Porte, se sont réunis à Beyrouth chez le Commissaire de Sa Majesté Britannique. La séance est ouverte à deux heures de l'après-midi, sous la présidence de M. de Weckbecker.

Le procès-verbal de la séance précédente est lu et adopté, après avoir subi quelques modifications. Abro Efendi n'ayant pas reçu encore les instructions qui doivent lui être adressées par Fuad Pacha ne croit pas pouvoir signer ce procès-verbal : un débat s'engage à ce propos.

Le Commissaire Russe donne lecture des instructions que Fuad Pacha lui-même a dû recevoir de son Gouvernement et dont le texte définitif a été communiqué aux Représentants des Puissances intéressés. Sur l'observation qui lui est faite que sa signature ne doit avoir pour effet que de constater sa présence et l'exactitude du compte-rendu, Abro Efendi se décide à signer avec tous les Commissaires le procès-verbal de la première séance.

Il renouvelle à cette occasion la réserve déjà faite par lui et déclare que les informations qu'il a fournies ne sauraient, en l'absence d'instructions de la part de Fuad Pacha, avoir aucun caractère officiel.

Lord Dufferin interpelle Abro Efendi sur un fait des plus graves à la charge de Hasan Efendi, Gouverneur de Hasbeya, et de Mustafa Pacha, Commandant des troupes dans le village de Mûnis.

Le premier aurait donné l'ordre de relâcher des prisonniers Druses, et le second, après s'être fait livrer ces prisonniers, les aurait mises en liberté.

Abro Efendi n'a aucune connaissance de cet incident, sur lequel il promet de faire des recherches.

Plusieurs des Commissaires prennent successivement la parole au sujet du droit d'intervention que possède la Commission, sans avoir pu obtenir encore la faculté de l'exercer pour ce qui regarde le procès de Khurshid Pacha, et celui des autres personnes traduites devant le tribunal extraordinaire de Beirût.

En ce qui concerne les témoignages qu'il importe de recueillir, M. de Weckbecker est d'avis que la Commission ne pourrait faire comparaître directement devant elle, en l'absence de Fuad Pacha, les personnes qui offriraient de fournir des renseignements.

Il pense qu'en agissant ainsi la Commission outrepassait son droit.

Cette opinion est combattue par les Commissaires de Prusse et de France. Abro Efendi aborde dans le sens du Commissaire Autrichien. La Commission doit éviter, dit-il, tout ce qui pourrait porter atteinte à l'autorité souveraine du Sultan et affaiblir son prestige. Le Gouvernement fait tout ce qu'il peut. Des actes de sévérité ont eu lieu à Damas. En ce moment Fuad Pacha est dans le Liban occupé à punir les coupables, et à soulager les Chrétiens.

Le Commissaire-Prussien revient au procès de Khurshid Pacha, sur lequel la Commission manque toujours d'éclaircissement.

M. Novikow regrette également que la Commission n'ait reçu du Gouvernement aucune communication, bien qu'elle ait manifesté le désir d'exercer son droit d'investigation sur la totalité des faits qui se sont produits dans ces derniers mois.

Ce droit, dit-il, a été confirmé par l'admission formelle de la Porte au principe de l'enquête collective—admission exprimée clairement dans les instructions qu'elle a adressées à son Commissaire Extraordinaire; et la Commission envisage l'exercice de ce droit comme ayant commencé pour elle depuis le moment où elle en a formulé la seconde par écrit à son Excellence Fuad Pacha par l'entremise d'Abro Efendi.

Abro Efendi fait observer qu'on doit d'abord laisser à Fuad Pacha le temps de répondre à la note dans laquelle les Commissaires lui ont fait part de leurs intentions.

Le Commissaire Français appuie la réclamation de MM. de Rehfués et Novikow. Il attend avec impatience le moment où la Commission pourra intervenir dans l'enquête.

Le Délégué Ottoman s'étonne qu'on veuille entraver la liberté d'action de Fuad Pacha. M. de Rehfués dit que les instructions des Commissaires ne leur prescrivent pas de commencer leurs travaux que lorsque Fuad Pacha aura terminé sa tâche.

Le Commissaire Français croit s'apercevoir que Fuad Pacha n'éprouve pas aussi vivement que les autres membres de la Commission le désir d'exercer une action commune, tandis que ceux-ci sont prêts à s'entendre avec lui.

Abro Efendi ne partage pas cette opinion.

Le Président propose à la Commission de se transporter à Mokhtarah, où Fuad Pacha se trouve en ce moment.

M. Bécclard n'est pas de cet avis. Il eût été charmé que Fuad Pacha fût présent à Beirût, pour y prendre part aux travaux de la Commission; mais il croit que ce n'est pas à la Commission d'aller rejoindre le Plénipotentiaire Ottoman à Mokhtarah. Dans son opinion les Commissaires des cinq Puissances devraient plutôt se transporter à Damas. Les nouvelles reçues en dernier lieu de cette ville lui paraissent fort graves. Par sa présence, la Commission parviendrait, non seulement à rassurer la population Chrétienne en intimidant les auteurs de troubles, mais à déterminer le châtiment des vrais coupables qui jusqu'à présent n'ont pas été atteints.

Il faut que la justice suspendue en quelque sorte depuis le départ de Fuad Pacha reprenne son cours. Toutefois la Commission ne devait pas quitter Beirût avant d'avoir pris les mesures convenables pour imprimer une impulsion rigoureuse à la procédure criminelle entamée contre Khurshid Pacha et ses complices.

M. de Weckbecker est d'accord avec le préopinant sur l'utilité d'un voyage à Damas, mais la Commission pourrait se rendre dans cette ville après être allée d'abord se concerter avec Fuad Pacha à Mokhtarah.

Le Commissaire Prussien dit qu'on ne pourra s'occuper du procès de Khurshid Pacha que lorsqu'on aura reçu la réponse du Plénipotentiaire Ottoman. Quant aux dangers qui peuvent menacer la population Chrétienne de Damas, il ne s'en rend pas bien compte.

M. Novikow s'en range à l'opinion de M. Bécclard sur l'opportunité d'un voyage de la Commission à Damas, tout en admettant la réserve indiquée par M. de Rehfués, c'est-à-dire, qu'on ne doit aller à Damas qu'après avoir pris une part active à l'enquête judiciaire qui se poursuit à Beirût.

Le Commissaire Prussien pense que la crainte approuvée par les Musulmans de Damas de voir leur ville occupée par les troupes Françaises, doit être une cause de sécurité pour les Chrétiens.

Le Commissaire Français croit aussi que pour les Musulmans de Damas, l'occupation Française serait une profanation, mais il tient grand compte des haines religieuses, qui sont plus profondes que jamais. Déjà on sait que les meneurs sont en relation avec les Druses du Hauran. En frappant la tête du complot, on pourrait arrêter le mouvement qui se prépare. A l'appui de son opinion, M. Bécclard donne lecture de plusieurs passages d'un rapport officiel et d'une lettre particulière dans lesquels le Consul de France à Damas présente la situation comme s'étant modifiée dans un sens très fâcheux.

M. Bécclard donne aussi lecture de quelques fragments d'une lettre du Général de Beaufort qui sembleraient prouver que la présence de Fuad Pacha et de ses troupes dans le sud des districts mixtes n'a produit jusqu'à ce jour aucun résultat sérieux. Les Druses ont pu gagner le Hauran en traversant les défilés confiés à la garde de l'armée Turque, ou former des rassemblements sans être inquiétés.

Quant aux Chrétiens, leur misère est affreuse. Ils manquent de tout, et sont exposés à mourir de faim. Le Commissaire Français propose de venir à leur secours le plus tôt possible, soit au moyen des fonds que possèdent les Comités de Beyrouth, soit même au moyen d'un emprunt. Il termine en annonçant la prochaine arrivée du Général de Beaufort, qui serait bien aise, durant son séjour à Beyrouth, de se mettre en rapport avec les Commissaires.

M. de Weckbecker recommande pour venir en aide aux Chrétiens la formation d'un Comité Central de Secours. Cette proposition est généralement appuyée, même par Lord Dufferin, qui fait observer, toutefois, que le Comité Anglo-Américain n'est pas libre de se fonder dans le sein des autres Comités. Revenant sur quelques uns des points articulés dans la lettre du Général de Beaufort, M. Bécclard parle du séquestre mis sur les grains à Baalbek. Le séquestre s'applique aux grains des Chrétiens comme à ceux des Druses.

M. de Rehfués cite à l'appui du passage relatif aux Druses, un fait qui est venu à sa connaissance. C'est qu'ils rentrent de tous côtés dans le Liban, et que, partout où ils paraissent, les soldats Turcs les protègent.

Le Commissaire Français fait observer que les massacres n'ont eu lieu, lors des derniers événements, que dans les localités où il se trouvait des garnisons Turcs. Il invoque sur ce point le témoignage de M. de Weckbecker, qui reconnaît l'exactitude de cette assertion. Abro Efendi croit pouvoir affirmer que les Druses qui rentrent dans le Liban sont ceux qui ont été rassurés par la proclamation de Fuad Pacha. Lorsqu'ils trouvent des Chrétiens installés chez eux, ils les expulsent. Interpellé par Lord Dufferin sur la question de savoir quelle mesure Fuad Pacha prenait à Mokhtarah pour mettre la main sur les Druses coupables, Abro Efendi répond, les mesures sont en voie d'exécution. Fuad Pacha ne peut pas tout faire à la fois, et la Commission doit attendre la communication des résultats obtenus avant d'émettre une opinion sur ses actes.

Le Président invite la Commission de se prononcer tant sur son proposition que sur celle du Commissaire Français.

M. Bécclard insiste sur la nécessité de transférer le siège de la Commission à Damas.

Le Commissaire Prussien croit qu'on peut par d'autres moyens rendre la sécurité à la population Chrétienne de Damas tandis qu'il est urgent d'intervenir dans les procès qui s'instruisent à Beirût.

Abro Efendi ne peut, dit-il, faire aucune communication relativement à ce procès avant d'y avoir été autorisé par ses instructions.

Le Président fait observer que la Commission ne peut agir que de concert avec Fuad Pacha.

Abro Efendi demande si les investigations de la Commission doivent s'exercer pendant le cours de la procédure ou après l'achèvement du procès.

Il lui est répondu que dans le dernier cas les investigations le plus

souvent seraient illusoires. Sur l'insistance du Président, qui juge nécessaire pour la Commission de se rendre à Mokhtarah, afin d'entrer en rapport direct avec Fuad Pacha, le Commissaire Prussien exprime l'opinion qu'après ce qui s'est passé, une telle démarche serait contraire à la dignité des Commissaires. Cette opinion est partagée par le Commissaire Français, mais combattue par Abro Efendi, qui trouve que la question d'humanité doit passer avant tout.

Le Commissaire Russe insiste sur la nécessité de sortir de l'inaction dans laquelle la Commission se trouve. Il veut qu'on intervienne sans retard dans l'enquête ouverte à Beirût.

Tous les Commissaires reconnaissent qu'il y a lieu pour eux de se rendre à Damas, mais l'époque de ce voyage, tout en devant être prochaine, n'est pas définitivement arrêtée.

Le Commissaire Français dépose sur le bureau une requête des habitants Chrétiens du Haurân, qui se plaignent de l'affreuse situation à laquelle ils sont réduits.

Il est décidé, sur la proposition du Président, que cette question sera examinée dans la séance suivante.

Il est également décidé que M. de Weckbecker se mettra en rapport avec les Présidents des Comités de Secours institués à Beirût, et les invitera à se rendre dans le sein de la Commission.

La séance est levée à cinq heures et demie.

(Suivent les signatures.)

No. 212.

Lord J. Russell to Consul Brant.

(No. 9.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, October 25, 1860.

I HAVE received from Sir Moses Montefiore the letter of which, and of the petition inclosed in it, I herewith transmit to you copies,* from which it would appear that the Christians at Damascus are endeavouring to raise an outcry against the Jews of that place as having taken part with the Mussulmans in the late atrocities committed upon the Christian population.

I have seen nothing in the correspondence of Her Majesty's servants in Syria to justify such an imputation, and, indeed, the communication from Sir Moses Montefiore was the first information on the subject which has reached me; and I need not say that, while it is impossible to believe that the charge brought against the Jews rests upon any foundation, the fact of its being made reflects little credit upon the Christians, who should have been taught by their own sufferings to refrain from all attempts to involve others equally innocent with themselves in such grievous calamities as those of which Damascus has lately been the theatre.

I have to instruct you to pay immediate attention to this matter, and to use your utmost endeavours to preserve the Jewish population of Damascus from becoming the victims of such monstrous calumny. You will state to the Governor of Damascus that Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople has been instructed to call the attention of the Porte to this charge against the Jews, and to require that they should be protected from wrong in consequence thereof; and you will warn the Governor that his conduct in this respect will be most closely scrutinized, and that Her Majesty's Government will use their utmost influence with the Porte to cause any harsh and unmerited treatment which may be inflicted on Jews by Turkish authorities to be visited on those authorities with the same severity as would be wrongs done to Christians.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

* No. 199.

No. 213.

Lord J. Russell to Consul-General Moore.

(No. 10.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, October 25, 1860.

I TRANSMIT to you, under flying seal, a despatch which I have addressed to Mr. Consul Brant respecting the apprehensions of the Jews of Damascus in consequence of their having been charged by the Christians with having taken part with the Mussulmans in the late massacres.*

You will forward my despatch to Mr. Brant, showing it in the first instance to Lord Dufferin, if he is still at Beyrout; and you will hold to Fuad Pasha, and to any of the high Turkish authorities with whom you may be in communication, the same language on this subject as that which I have prescribed to Mr. Brant.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 214.

Lord J. Russell to Sir H. Bulwer.

(No. 570.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, October 25, 1860.

I ACQUAINTED you, by my telegram of the 20th instant, with the apprehensions felt by the Jews at Damascus in consequence of the charges brought against them by the Christians of having instigated the late massacres, and I instructed you to call the attention of the Porte to the subject, and to direct Her Majesty's Consuls at Damascus and Beyrout to interpose for the protection of the Jews.

I now inclose, for your Excellency's information, copies of a letter from Sir Moses Montefiore and of the petition from the Jews inclosed in it, on which my telegram was founded, and also a copy of an instruction which I have addressed to Mr. Consul Brant.†

Your Excellency will learn from these papers as well the details of the representation which has been made to Her Majesty's Government as the view that they have taken of it; and I have to instruct you to use every effort to induce the Porte to take the most effectual measures to preserve the Jews from becoming victims of the unfounded charges which have been brought against them.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 215.

Lord J. Russell to Sir H. Bulwer.

(No. 578.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, October 25, 1860.

I HAVE received from Her Majesty's Consul at Damascus a despatch dated the 5th instant, identic with his No. 51 to your Excellency, and I have to call your attention to the state of things at that place, as reported by Mr. Brant.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 216.

Lord J. Russell to Lord Dufferin.

(No. 19.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, October 25, 1860.

HER Majesty's Government cannot but commend the humane and generous motives which led your Lordship to give your private security

* No. 212.

† No. 199 and 212.

to Fuad Pasha to enable him to raise 5,000*l.*, under the circumstances reported in your despatch No. 18 of the 29th of September to Sir Henry Bulwer; but I regret to state to you that they cannot relieve your Lordship from the pecuniary obligation which you have incurred.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 217.

Sir H. Bulwer to Lord J. Russell.—(Received October 27.)

(No. 669. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Therapia, October 16, 1860.

I INCLOSE you a private letter I have received from Mr. Brant, because it is precisely what he says of M. Outré that I should have to say of M. de Lavalette. The manner of both seems friendly and plausible, but neither the one nor the other inspires me with confidence.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY L. BULWER.

Inclosure in No. 217.

Consul Brant to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Damascus, September 27, 1860.

I HAVE been favoured by your Excellency's private note of the 11th September. I have long since expressed my thanks and pleasure at your Excellency's flattering approval of my conduct; and I am happy in being able to state that Lord John Russell has also expressed his approbation in most gratifying terms.

I think Fuad Pasha has been too tender of great criminals, and too precise in obtaining evidence, which against such could not have been expected to be procured. To inculcate certain persons Mussulmans will not give decisive testimony.

I feel persuaded that Her Majesty's Commissioner will not fail to press his Excellency to execute justice, but the example will have lost a great deal of its salutary effect by delay.

Your Excellency will perceive that fanaticism is not yet crushed out: it is depressed, but only waits an opportunity again to raise its head, and to avenge what it considers the wrongs it has suffered. After all Fuad Pasha's doings, let there succeed a weak Administration, and the same scenes are more to be apprehended than they were before.

Outrey is, in my opinion, a very difficult man to fathom; under the most open and frank professions, I cannot feel that he is sincere. Looking at the set of intriguers who surround him, at the reports which seem to originate from the French followers, at the plausible explanations of very questionable pecuniary claims on the Turkish Government (which are universally regarded as iniquitous exactions), and at the general feeling of all who are not of the French party, notwithstanding his own agreeable, plausible, and apparently frank bearing—as I said before, I cannot trust him. It must be remembered that his brother is First Dragoman to the French Embassy, that there existed the most intimate relations with M. Thouvenel, and that the same exist with the Marquis of Lavalette; that French Consuls have usually full and precise instructions how to act; under such circumstances your Excellency will not be at a loss to appreciate the part he is likely to play in Syria better than I am.

Your Excellency inquires about Colonel O'Reilly. He has been absent the greater part of the time since his return to Syria with Fuad Pasha, employed in conveying his Excellency's orders to Beyrout, in escorting to the coast Christians from Hasbeya and Rasheya, and on

other affairs of which I have no knowledge. He seems to entertain a high opinion of his Chief.

His Highness Abd-el-Kader has received the Medjidié from the Sultan, the Grand Cross of the Legion of Honour, a pair of pistols from the President of the United States. He is about to receive a high decoration from Sardinia; while from the British Government he has only had a letter of thanks which I was directed to address to his Highness. I believe this has caused a feeling of disappointment. Could not something be done to remove this?

I have, &c.
(Signed) JAS. BRANT.

No. 218.

Sir H. Bulwer to Lord J. Russell.—(Received October 27.)

(No. 676.)

My Lord,

Therapia, October 16, 1860.

AS some observations were made in Parliament and elsewhere in question of the part taken by Her Majesty's Ambassador as to the affairs of Syria, I have deemed it well, notwithstanding the flattering manner in which my conduct was alluded to at the time by Her Majesty's Government, to draw up and here transmit a brief account of the steps taken by me in relation to those affairs, so that if the publication of further despatches as to this subject takes place, I may, within as short a compass as possible, correct at once any misconceptions or misrepresentations.

When I was first appointed to this Embassy, the Earl of Malmesbury particularly directed my attention to Syrian affairs, and to some despatches from Mr. Alison thereupon.* The pith of these despatches was, that our Consuls were too much in the habit of getting irretrievably into disputes with the local authorities and other foreign agents on frivolous grounds, thereby greatly embarrassing the conduct of affairs.

On my arrival at Constantinople, after some communication with Mr. Alison, I addressed an instruction to Her Majesty's Consul-General at Beyrout,† which was subsequently adopted by other foreign Governments as a model of the instructions they should themselves issue to their Consular Agents; whilst an understanding was also come to by the French and English Embassies, with the approbation of their Governments, to the effect that when the French and English Consuls had any disagreement, their differences should be referred to M. Thouvenel and myself.‡

The object of these instructions was to provide (since whatever dispute occurs between a Consul and a Pasha has ultimately to be referred to Constantinople) that all disputes of this nature should be referred to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople before they had reached a certain height; and on the same principle that before disputes between the French and English Consuls had become difficult of arrangement, the causes of them should be impartially investigated by their superior authority.

I may add that this instruction produced the best effect, and that from that time up to the present the English and French Consuls-General and Consuls have acted in tolerable accord.

On the 1st of January in the following year, I likewise gave a Consular (circular) instruction. This instruction prescribed the general line which Consuls should pursue in the ordinary course of affairs; but in the case of extraordinary circumstances, left the greatest latitude to the local Agents, making their own judgment the rule of their conduct.

In the beginning of the autumn of last year, I had cause to consider that the state of Syria was exceedingly unsatisfactory. I wrote to Fuad Pasha, consequently, in the strongest manner, on the complaints which

* See Mr. Alison's No. 333 of June 5, and his No. 249 of June 1, 1858.

† See instructions to Mr. Moore, No. 5 of August 28, inclosed in Sir H. Bulwer's No. 188 of September 1, 1858.

‡ See Sir H. Bulwer's No. 186 of September 9, and No. 229 of September 29, 1858.

reached me, stating: "It is therefore with the most earnest and anxious desire to maintain the best interests of the Empire, as well as to protect those of Her Majesty's subjects, that I submit to the Porte the necessity of a more rigorous treatment towards all who violate their duty, without which the excellent intentions of the Sultan and his Ministers in these countries will be in vain."*

And I required, about that time, the removal of Khorshid Pasha from Beyrout. I renewed this demand in another official note, dated September 1, and which is in your Lordship's hands. I also wrote to your Lordship expressing my desire to visit Syria myself, if it were possible, in order to acquire that knowledge of a country which can alone be acquired by personal inspection, suggesting that if this was inconvenient Mr. Alison should be sent; and I also suggested the advisability of sending one or two ships of war to the coast of Syria, in order to support the remonstrances which we might deem it fit to make.† Your Lordship paid me the compliment of thinking that my presence could not be spared at Constantinople, but consented to the mission of Mr. Alison. Your Lordship thought at the same time, for reasons which, looking at the general state of European affairs at that moment, seemed to me highly judicious, it would not be expedient to disperse Her Majesty's naval forces in the Mediterranean without some immediate and pressing necessity.

Mr. Alison was consequently sent with the instructions of which your Lordship approved, and to which I here refer.‡

It is clear that during the mission of a person of the weight and ability of Mr. Alison, I did not like to take any decided steps of a general nature in Syrian affairs unless suggested by him, and in so far my correspondence with the Consuls could only be limited.

I should state, however, that directly Mr. Alison's Report reached me I communicated its substance verbally to the Grand Vizier and the Minister for Foreign Affairs, and subsequently forwarded them a translation of the same, and pressed strongly upon both the necessity of adopting some immediate and decisive steps for establishing the Sultan's authority, which seemed to be dangerously weak, and putting down the administrative abuses which appeared to prevail throughout the whole of one of the most important provinces of the Ottoman dominions. Here, indeed, is the place that I should observe, that when Mr. Alison went to Syria I strongly advised the Porte to send a Turkish Commissioner with extraordinary powers, so that the two might act together, and that such changes as could be made at once should be made without a moment's delay. Fuad Pasha agreed in the principle contained in my recommendation, but he observed, that if an Ottoman Commissioner was invested with the powers I described, and was sent contemporaneously with Mr. Alison, it would excite the jealousy of other Powers. However, he added, he would keep the idea in mind, and on the first favourable occasion it should be carried out.

On the return of Mr. Alison, therefore, I again pressed my former counsel upon the attention of the Porte, which promised me that it should be attended to, and I wrote informing your Lordship of this resolution.

Shortly after this the Turkish Ministry was disorganized by the dismissal of Aali Pasha, and then I brought the question of sending a High Commissioner to Syria before Kuprisli Pasha.

He, like his predecessor, approved of the plan, but said there was some difficulty at that time in selecting a fitting person, in consequence of the differences that, owing to the recent change of Ministry, prevailed among the leading persons of the Empire, and which, shortly afterwards, led to Kuprisli's overthrow.

Rushdi Pasha was Kuprisli's successor, and I again brought before him my decided opinion as to the nomination in question, and the absolute necessity of taking urgent steps as to Syrian affairs. Rushdi Pasha, like his predecessors, agreed entirely with my view, but, like his predecessors, hesitated constantly as to the choice to be made; and it is worthy of remark, that as I had suggested Kuprisli Pasha as a fitting

* See in Sir H. Bulwer's No. 113 of August 24, 1859.

† See Sir H. Bulwer's No. 113 of August 24, 1859.

‡ Copies inclosed in Sir H. Bulwer's No. 177 of September 27, and No. 210 of October 10, 1859.

selection before his Highness was Grand Vizier, so I suggested it again when he went out of office.

My opinion now is that had Kuprisli Pasha either of these times been sent to Syria, circumstances would not have arisen which we now deplore.

It is, however, to be said that the arguments used both by Aali and Rushdi Pasha against offering Kuprisli the appointment were plausible, and, perhaps, just.

They deemed he would consider it rather as a pretext for getting rid of a rival than as a proposal for giving, under critical circumstances, a high important post to a functionary distinguished for his zeal and ability.

At last, in the beginning of April, thinking not only that the general affairs of the Empire were, in many respects, in a critical state, but that those of Syria especially required the promptest attention, I appointed an interview with Rushdi Pasha, at which I requested both Aali and Fuad to be present; and as Rushdi Pasha did not speak French with perfect fluency, and as I also wished to have a witness at my interview, I took Mr. Etienne Pisani, the head interpreter of the Embassy, with me to this interview.

On this occasion, after setting before the Grand Vizier many abuses which I conceived required immediate redress, and telling him plainly that when persons were appointed to high situations it was incumbent upon them to take upon themselves the responsibility attached thereto, I urged the three Turkish dignitaries who were present to act with more vigour and decision, and said that unless they increased their strength in Syria, and sent an able and capable man there at once, I threw upon them the whole responsibility of whatever might occur.

On the 20th of May, from one of the reports of Mr. L. Moore, then acting as head interpreter, I extract the following passage:—

"I went on to say that your Excellency had repeatedly drawn the attention of the Ministers to the state of things in Syria, but that, notwithstanding the solemn promises made to you to introduce reforms and establish a better system of government in that distracted country, as yet no steps have been taken in that sense, and that things continue in the same state to the detriment of the interests of all the parties."

Nor is this all: so strongly was I impressed with the necessity of keeping watch over Syrian affairs that, following up the suggestion which at the end of August I had made to your Lordship, I had made frequent suggestions to the Admiral on the station to send, whenever the exigencies of the public service admitted of it, a vessel to the coast of Syria.

From a private letter written to me by the Admiral in the month of March I extract the following passage:—

"I was deterred from sending a ship to the coast of Syria in the autumn by my instructions to take all my disposal vessels with me to Gibraltar; but the 'Cadmus,' which I had intended should have gone to Beyrout, has returned with me, and having been refitted I intended sending her there after the arrival of the English mails, to communicate and co-operate with Mr. Moore, and remain on the coast until her provisions are nearly expended, which was to be about the month of July." By this passage it will be seen that there was a probability of a vessel of war being ordered to the coast of Syria from about that period up to the month of July, and that this would have been effected by my advice. Subsequent circumstances, however, interfered with the arrangement; and it is to be observed that nothing is more difficult for an Admiral than to attend to the different calls that are made upon him—a consideration which must limit an Ambassador in his requests and in attempting to force them beyond certain bounds upon the Admiral, who generally exercises a sound discretion.

Some further correspondence, however, took place between me and the Admiral, from the time to which I allude to the month of June (June 8), when I telegraphed to him in the following terms:—

"Serious accounts, but possibly exaggerated, reach me from the Syrian coast.

"The French intend sending one ship or more there. If you can

spare one send it there, it would certainly be desirable; and in such case I would recommend it should be a vessel of some importance."

As to my correspondence with Mr. Moore I have said that up to the period of Mr. Alison's quitting Syria, that correspondence was necessarily confined.

Your Lordship knows well enough that in correspondence in general, whether as to your Lordship with me, or as to mine with a Consul in the Ottoman Empire, only those despatches, as a general rule, are answered which require an answer, without which it would be impossible to get through the public business.

Mr. Moore's general instructions were sufficient for all ordinary cases. They left everything to him in extraordinary and unforeseen cases; which I contend, if you have an agent you can trust, is the only satisfactory course to adopt: and thus it proved—for when unforeseen circumstances arose Mr. Moore was able to act, and did act, on his own judgment.

What a Consul wants in writing to an Ambassador here is that the Ambassador, unless he disapproves the Consul's conduct, should carry out his views.

Not only was every ordinary precaution taken by me against neglect as to Syrian affairs, a particular state of things existed at the Embassy, which rendered it next to impossible that any neglect could take place on that subject.

From the 19th October, 1859, to the month of March, Mr. Lionel Moore conducted under my orders the Consular correspondence relative to Syria, and diligently attended to the questions connected with it. This same duty fell on Mr. Alison on his return in March. Now Mr. Lionel Moore is the son of Mr. Moore, Consul-General in Syria; Mr. Alison had just come from Syria, and been studying its affairs. The employment of these gentlemen, therefore, as described, furnished the best guarantee that nothing important could be overlooked; and, in fact, on casting my eye over the despatches from Syria I have seen that on each of them every step that was necessary was immediately taken upon them. Thus, up to the period at which the disturbances in the Mountain occurred, everything that was possible to prevent these disturbances had been urged and suggested. When they broke out, I not only gave Mr. Moore every personal countenance and assistance in my power,—I immediately got the other Representatives to act with me in prescribing to their Consular Agents to act in union with Her Majesty's Consul-General.

As to keeping your Lordship generally informed as to the state of Syria, you are perfectly aware of how much this was the case, and in order not to encumber my statement, I shall merely refer to the despatches marked in the margin.*

My general opinion at the first breaking out of the Mountain war was certainly that that war would be confined to the Mountain, and expend itself as such wars have generally done, not only in Mount Lebanon, but in all places where hostile and armed tribes are similarly placed towards each other within a limited circle.

The extraordinary means which, it is said, were taken to excite mutual alarm and animosity on the one side, and the extraordinary conduct of the Ottoman troops and their leaders on the other, carried matters beyond the bounds which under the usual course of circumstances could have been calculated upon.

All the events that occurred, I do not pretend, then, to have anticipated; but that for which I claim credit is for having for some time past observed the general state of Syria, and the particular state of Mount Lebanon, and foreseen that unless some remedy was applied to each, great evils and great dangers would be the consequence; and for having also taken every step in my power to prevent those evils and dangers from occurring: and when I say that the Sultan and his Ministers have both done me the honour to acknowledge that had my advice been followed the calamities that we

* No. 207, September 19, 1858; No. 324, November 9, 1858; No. 420, December 8, 1858; No. 260, November 22, 1859; No. 208, December 16, 1859; No. 218, April 24, 1860; No. 317, June 9, 1860; No. 321, June 10, 1860; No. 331, June 13, 1860; No. 366, July 2, 1860; No. 388, July 6, 1860; No. 392, July 11, 1860; No. 405, July 16, 1860; No. 418, July 18, 1860.

have had to deplore would not have taken place, I feel that I have nothing more to add to this statement.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY L. BULWER.

No. 219.

Sir H. Bulwer to Lord J. Russell.—(Received October 27.)

(No. 681.)

My Lord,

Therapia, October 17, 1860.

HAVING received from Lord Dufferin various despatches, numbered from No. 1 to No. 21, of which copies have been already forwarded to your Lordship, I have consigned my observations on their contents in a despatch transmitted herewith in copy for your Lordship's information.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY L. BULWER.

Inclosure in No. 219.

Sir H. Bulwer to Lord Dufferin.

My Lord,

Therapia, October 15, 1860.

I HAVE received your Lordship's despatches from No. 1 to No. 21, both inclusive.

In the first place I should mention to you that the French Ambassador complained to me the other day of the collective note written by the Commissioners to Fuad Pasha, deeming that it makes the Commission too dependent upon his attending its sittings. I confess I could see nothing, in the communication referred to, to justify such complaint, and I understand from him this evening that that affair is at all events now arranged satisfactorily.

For my own part in this, as well as in all other matters, you seem to me to have acted with perfect judgment and propriety, and in such a manner as to merit Her Majesty's Government's approbation.

The cruelties which you signalize as having been committed by the Maronites manifest that it is neither the spirit of the Druses nor of the Maronites which deserves peculiar reprobation: the one and the other evince a disposition which distinguishes the Maronite Christian but little from the Infidel.

The conduct of the Turkish authorities, however, is to be looked at differently from that of either Druses or Maronites. The Turkish authorities are indeed to be considered as constituting the Government of the country: they are bound, therefore, to preserve order and put down violence on whatever side it manifests itself, and Europe, which confided to them the government of Syria, has a right to exact from them the obligations which all government imposes.

The punishment of those Turkish functionaries who failed in their duties was thus a simple question on which no doubt could exist.

When, however, we come to look at the conduct of the Druses, other reflections present themselves, and all the circumstances which attach to their situation and belong to their character should be deliberately weighed. If it is really true that there was an intention on the part of the Maronites to attack the Druses, and that the Maronites thus commenced the war, I think it is not to be wholly put out of sight that if one barbarous people attack another, that other is likely to repel such attack in a barbarous manner: and that what passes amidst such people cannot be judged entirely in reference to the customs, manners, opinions, and civilization of this refined States of the west of Europe.

To continue; if we were to look to the condition of Syria generally, and especially to that of Mount Lebanon, there might be political reasons against allowing the French, who have always protected the Maronites, to establish the predominance of that tribe. It may even be said that the effect of this measure would extend itself generally throughout the East.

On the other hand, the cruelties committed by the Druses on a race professing the Christian faith, has naturally excited a strong feeling of indignation among the Christian States.

Were your Lordship to be affected too much, either by the political considerations to which I have in the first place alluded, or by the feelings so painfully excited of which I have spoken in the second, you might possibly be led away too far in one direction or the other from the simple ends of justice. What it seems to me you have to do is to keep your mind as free as possible, in the peculiar circumstances in which you are placed, from any other thought than that of doing what, taking all things into consideration, seems to you fair and right, and which, when first impressions die away, will be so esteemed; and I say this, because I think almost the only advantage that a person writing calmly at a distance can be of, to an able man on the spot, is to keep his mind fixed upon one or two leading principles which are to direct his conduct and keep it above the transitory accidental impressions of the scene or the hour.

There is, however, one question alluded to in your despatches on which I think myself bound to express a decided opinion; an opinion, however, which, as I have no power of giving you instructions, will of course be subordinate to the opinions you may receive from home. Your Lordship seems to favour the idea of a prolonged occupation by European troops. I can easily understand how such an idea may force itself upon your mind; but, as when a person is acting under a particular impression, it always more or less, and sometimes insensibly, affects his general conduct, I cannot but express to you my conviction that a prolonged occupation of Syria by a large body of European troops would be likely to have the most serious consequences upon the general policy, and even upon the peace, of Europe. It will give an example which other military States will not be long without a reason for imitating; and little by little, the whole of the Turkish Empire will, in this way, fall under the dominion of those Powers which on any emergency can most easily dispose of a military force, without Great Britain being able to guard beforehand against the dangers which might arise from such a partition.

I confess, for my own part indeed, that I should be more disposed to sit down deliberately, and parcel out, after some fixed plan, the Ottoman territory, than thus to allow it to lapse, accidentally and cursorily as it were, into those hands from which we might have the greatest interest to preserve it.

I will not say that if a plan for governing Syria were decided upon, and that the presence of a very small European force, such as 1,000 men, formed of different nations, were judged expedient to give a moral force to the Ottoman authority, this might not be consented to without danger; but if you were to form your notions as to the general state of Syria on the idea that for some time to come it is to be under the control of an European army, you will have adopted a basis of which I should myself much doubt either the advantage or the feasibility.

I have thought it right to express to you frankly my own individual sentiments on this particular point, but they are accompanied by so much admiration for the tact which has hitherto distinguished your conduct, and I have so much reliance on the sound sense and judgment which I have always remarked in all your proceedings and correspondence, that I am sure you will take this exposition of my ideas as merely proceeding from the wish to avoid you any future embarrassments.

I have, &c.

(Signed) HENRY L. BULWER.

No. 219*.

Sir H. Bulwer to Lord J. Russell.—(Received October .)

(Telegraphic.)

Therapia, October 26, 1860, 2 P.M.

It is said Jews in Syria bought a good deal of plundered property at very low prices, and secreted things handed over to them by Mussulmans; but Aali Pasha will write immediately to Fuad on the matter.

No. 220.

Lord J. Russell to Lord Dufferin.

(No. 21.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, October 30, 1860.

IN consequence of the wish expressed by your Lordship that Colonel Burnaby should be allowed an extension of leave, to enable him to remain for a time in Syria, I consulted the General Commanding-in-chief on the subject; and His Royal Highness has informed me that under the circumstances he has no objection to Colonel Burnaby's leave being extended.

His Royal Highness has, however, called my attention to the fact that Colonel Burnaby is in Syria in no official capacity whatever, and is not authorized in any way to assume that he has any public duties to perform in that country; and your Lordship will take care, while calling Colonel Burnaby's attention to these facts, that no misapprehension prevails in the mind of the French General, or in any other quarter, as to Colonel Burnaby having no commission or authority whatever which should cause him to be looked upon as an officer employed in Syria on public service.

I am, &c.

(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 221.

Lord J. Russell to Sir H. Bulwer.

(No. 593.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, October 31, 1860.

I TRANSMIT, for your Excellency's information, copies of a letter and of its inclosure from the Admiralty,* showing the arrangements made by Vice-Admiral Martin with regard to the stationing of ships of war on the coast of Syria.

I am, &c.

(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 222.

Lord J. Russell to Sir H. Bulwer.

(No. 598.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, October 31, 1860.

I HAVE to state to you that Her Majesty's Government approve of your Excellency's conduct in regard to the affairs of Syria, as detailed in your despatch No. 676 of the 16th instant.

I am, &c.

(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 223.

Mr. Meade to Mr. Hammond.—(Received November 1.)

Dear Mr. Hammond,

Beyrout, October 22, 1860.

OWING to Lord Dufferin's temporary absence through indisposition, I transmit herewith copy of the Protocol of the Third Sitting of the Syrian Commission, copy of which has been sent to Constantinople to-day.

Believe me, &c.

(Signed) ROBERT H. MEADE

* No. 209.

Protocol of the Third Meeting of the Syrian Commission, held at Beyrout, October 11, 1860.

CEJOURD'HUI, Jeudi, onze Octobre, mil huit cent soixante, à deux heures de l'après-midi, la Commission Internationale, assistée d'Abro Efendi, Délégué Ottoman, s'est réunie à Beyrout sous la présidence de M. de Weckbecker. MM. Moore, Consul-Général de Sa Majesté Britannique, Canaris, Consul de Sa Majesté Hellénique, et le Comte de Perthuis, tous trois Présidents des Comités de Secours institués à Beyrout, sont introduits. Le Commissaire Autrichien prenant la parole invite ces messieurs à se mettre en rapport avec la Commission, et sur leur adhésion il est décidé que les trois Présidents des Comités de Secours, auxquels s'adjoindra ultérieurement M. de Weckbecker lui-même comme Président d'un Comité Autrichien en voie de formation, constitueront un Comité Directeur qui recevra de la Commission Internationale son impulsion, pour répartition et l'emploi des sommes fournies par la charité publique. A la demande de M. Novikow, il est pareillement décidé qu'une place sera réservée dans le Comité Directeur au Président du Comité Russe qui doit être formé lors de l'arrivée des fonds recueillis en Russie.

MM. Moore, Canaris, et de Perthuis s'étant retirés, le Président déclare la séance ouverte. Il est donné lecture du procès-verbal, qui après quelques modifications est signé par les Commissaires et par le Délégué Ottoman.

Le Commissaire Français donne communication de la requête adressée à la Commission Internationale par les Chrétiens du Haurân et dont l'examen avait été ajourné.

Lord Dufferin s'adressant à Abro Efendi demande s'il est vrai que le procès de Said Bey Jumblât soit déjà commencé.

Réponse affirmative d'Abro Efendi. Lord Dufferin : " Depuis quand ? " Abro Efendi : " Depuis que le Tribunal Extraordinaire a été institué. " Lord Dufferin : " Je désire connaître non pas la date de son arrestation, mais celle du jour où Said Bey Jumblât a comparu pour la première fois devant ses juges. " Abro Efendi : " Le procès de Said Bey Jumblât a commencé peu de jours après son arrestation. "

Le Président croit devoir faire observer à la Commission qu'il importe avant tout de savoir dans quelle mesure elle peut exercer son droit d'intervention dans la procédure suivie contre les inculpés ; or, suivant l'opinion déjà exprimée par lui, cette procédure se compose de deux parties distinctes : l'instruction, à laquelle les Commissaires doivent rester étrangers, et la défense, à laquelle ils peuvent assister. Mais encore faut-il savoir quand finit l'instruction et quand commence la défense. Quant au procès de Said Bey Jumblât, on doit supposer qu'il est déjà instruit, puisque cet accusé est en présence de ses juges. Abro Efendi reconnaît que le Tribunal est saisi de l'affaire. Le Président en conclut que la Commission peut intervenir dans le procès.

M. de Rehues demande si le Délégué Ottoman a reçu des instructions.

Abro Efendi déclare les avoir reçues et donne lecture d'une pièce rédigée par Fuad Pacha en réponse au Mémoire annexé au procès-verbal de la première séance.

Il est décidé qu'une copie de cette réponse sera jointe au présent Protocole.

Abro Efendi fait également connaître les principales dispositions d'un règlement provisoire élaboré par Fuad Pacha pour la partie mixte du Liban, momentanément divisée en quatre cercles.

La Commission se réserve d'examiner ce règlement lorsqu'il aura été traduit, et une discussion s'élève sur l'opinion émise par Fuad Pacha dans la réponse au deuxième point du Mémoire, à savoir, sur les difficultés qu'il oppose à l'intervention immédiate et directe de la Commission dans la procédure pendante devant le tribunal extraordinaire de Beyrout contre Khurshid Pacha et les autres inculpés.

Les membres de la Commission prennent tour à tour la parole et expriment unanimement l'opinion qu'ils ne font que réclamer l'exercice d'un droit incontestable en demandant à assister, personnellement ou par des délégués, aux audiences du Tribunal Extraordinaire de Beyrout. La distinction établie par Fuad Pacha entre l'enquête générale, pour laquelle il reconnaît la compétence des Commissaires, et l'enquête judiciaire, dont il prétend les exclure, est combattue avec force par tous les orateurs. Tous maintiennent expressément leur droit et invitent Abro Efendi à provoquer de la part du Plénipotentiaire Ottoman une nouvelle décision plus conforme aux instructions identiques dont ils sont munis, comme à ses propres instructions. Cette discussion, qui remplit la majeure partie de la séance, n'est suspendue qu'à de rares intervalles, pendant l'un desquels Abro Efendi communique à la Commission une lettre de Fuad Pacha relative à un engagement qu'a eu lieu à Medjdel Champs entre un parti de Druses et les troupes commandées par Mustapha Pacha. Dans cette rencontre, sur laquelle on manque encore des détails, les Druses ont été complètement battus. Fuad Pacha annonce également à Abro Efendi son départ pour Damas.

Le Délégué Ottoman s'efforce de soutenir l'opinion de Fuad Pacha sur le rôle assigné aux Commissaires, mais son argumentation ne peut prévaloir, et il déclare qu'il en réfèrera au Commissaire Extraordinaire de la Sublime Porte.

Tous les membres de la Commission déclarent de leur côté qu'ils entendent exercer leur droit dans toute sa plénitude en assistant à l'enquête judiciaire partout où une pareille enquête est ouverte.

Cette enquête est pour eux un des éléments essentiels de l'enquête générale, à laquelle ils doivent se livrer. Sur leur invitation répétée Abro Efendi s'engage à transmettre à Fuad Pacha l'expression du vœu formellement émis par la Commission. La réponse à cette notification sera communiquée dans la séance suivante.

Le Commissaire Russe soumet à la Commission les renseignements qui lui sont parvenus sur l'état précaire des Chrétiens du Haurân. Il faut observer d'abord que, pendant les massacres, les Sheikhs Druses paraissent avoir généralement suivi le système de porter le meurtre et le pillage dans les districts voisins, tout en épargnant, plus ou moins, les Chrétiens de leurs propres districts, dans le but de s'en prévaloir après pour obtenir leur grâce. Le même système a été suivi par le fameux brigand Ishmaïl Attrash, Sheikh Druse du Haurân, qui a dirigé les massacres de Rasheya. Or, d'après les informations parvenues à M. Novikow, ce Sheikh, ayant rendu quelques services aux Chrétiens des villages avoisinant sa résidence de Noura, obligerait maintenant ces mêmes Chrétiens à intercéder en sa faveur auprès du Gouvernement en les menaçant de sa vengeance s'ils ne le faisaient pas. Les forces considérables dont il dispose depuis l'arrivée dans le Haurân des Druses émigrés du Liban et sa férocité connue rendraient l'exécution de ses menaces fatale aux Chrétiens de sa province.

La Commission décide que cet incident sera porté à la connaissance de Fuad Pacha.

La séance est levée à cinq heures trois quarts.

(Suivent les signatures.)

Annexe I.

1. Damas.—La Commission demande communication des dossiers relatifs à la procédure suivie contre les coupables ou accusés. Cette communication doit lui servir à se former une opinion sur la question de savoir s'il y a lieu d'exercer de nouvelles poursuites. La Commission est d'avis que le désarmement

1. Damas.—On s'empressera de satisfaire la demande de la Commission concernant la communication des dossiers relatifs à la procédure suivie contre les coupables et les accusés. Fuad Pacha donnera, immédiatement, ordre au Tribunal Extraordinaire ainsi qu'au Conseil de Guerre qu'il avait institués d'office

général de la population de Damas est une mesure d'urgence que le Gouvernement ne doit pas hésiter à prendre.

2. Beyrouth. — La Commission demande des éclaircissements sur la nature de l'enquête commencée contre Khurshid Pacha et les autres autorités. Son droit d'intervention dans cette enquête est évident; la Commission est disposée à l'exercer dès à présent, ou personnellement, ou par des délégués.

Même demande en ce qui concerne l'enquête projetée ou commencée contre les Druses.

qu'ils communiquent à la Commission les dossiers de tous les procès.

Quant à l'avis de la Commission sur le désarmement de la population de Damas, cette mesure a été arrêtée par l'autorité dans le but de rendre stable le tranquillité de cette ville, mais d'autres mesures plus urgentes l'avaient obligée d'en ajourner l'exécution. Fuad Pacha déclare qu' aussitôt que les circonstances lui permettront de retourner encore à Damas et de prendre ses dispositions, il mettra immédiatement en exécution cette mesure, déjà arrêtée en principe.

2. Beyrouth. — Le Tribunal Extraordinaire nommé d'office par Fuad Pacha, et qui siège à Beyrouth, sera chargé de donner à la Commission tous les éclaircissements sur la nature de l'enquête commencée contre Khurshid Pacha et les autres autorités.

On n'hésite pas à reconnaître la participation de la Commission à l'enquête, mais les instructions de la Porte élaborées avec les Représentants des Puissances à Constantinople établissent une distinction entre l'enquête générale et les procès qui s'ensuivront contre les accusés sujets du Sultan. L'intervention de la Commission personnellement ou par délégation dans l'enquête, en participant aux travaux du tribunal qui est appelé à juger les accusés et à condamner les coupables, changera les dispositions de ces instructions. Il faut conserver cette distinction entre l'enquête générale et la procédure de ceux qui seront accusés individuellement par suite de cette enquête même.

Fuad Pacha est d'avis que la Commission doit s'occuper d'abord d'une enquête générale sur les derniers événements du Liban, recueillir des informations sur la nature de la guerre civile qui a éclaté entre les Chrétiens et les Druses. Ce sera un procès entre les deux populations qui établira en premier lieu la cause de ces événements, la culpabilité générale, pour ainsi dire, des Druses et celle des autorités qui n'ont pas fait leurs devoirs. Cette enquête générale mettra la Commission à même de désigner à l'autorité d'autres individus qui ne sont pas encore entre les mains de la justice, et le Tribunal Extraordinaire établi à Beyrouth communiquera à la Commission les

dossiers de tous les procès pour montrer comment il a rempli son mandat; elle servira aussi comme un point de départ dans la question des indemnités en établissant la nature de ce grand conflit entre les deux peuplades de la Montagne. Les autorités locales ainsi que le Tribunal Extraordinaire seront appelés à donner par l'entremise du Délégué Ottoman toutes les informations, et à communiquer les pièces que la Commission sera dans le cas de demander; la Commission donnera son avis, par la même entremise, au Tribunal sur les différents procès dont il s'occupera. Si la Commission admet cette manière de procéder le Délégué Ottoman s'empressera de mettre à l'exécution ces derniers points.

3. Les Chrétiens. — L'autorité s'occupe assidument du rétablissement des Chrétiens dans leurs foyers. Partout les cadavres ont été ensevelis; il n'en restait qu'à Deir-el-Kamar qui ont tous été aussi entièrement inhumés. L'autorité a pris les mesures nécessaires pour la reconstruction des maisons brûlées. On a déjà commencé à donner des secours aux habitants des villages qui se trouvent aux environs de Beyrouth. Fuad Pacha a envoyé un Commissaire *ad hoc* à Bekâa pour veiller à la reconstruction des maisons des villages situés sur le versant oriental de la Montagne et de la plaine, avec l'autorisation de faire couper dans les villages Musulmans et Druses le bois qui leur sera nécessaire, et dans les districts de Djézzi et d'autres où on peut se procurer du bois on procédera de la même manière. Quant à Deir-el-Kamar, dépourvu de bois et obligé d'en faire venir de Beyrouth, un secours en argent a été assigné à ses habitants comme à compte sur les indemnités données pour la construction des maisons.

Les grains qui appartenaient aux chefs Druses et qui ont été trouvés dans le Bekâa et dans la Montagne seront destinés à nourrir les Chrétiens qui se rétablissent dans leurs villages: deux petits convois ont été déjà envoyés à Deir-el-Kamar et à Zahlé.

Fuad Pacha s'occupe en ce moment-ci de l'affaire de la restitution des objets pillés par les Druses; pour recouvrer surtout des lits et des couvertures qui sont d'une absolue nécessité aux Chrétiens, et qui leur

3. Les Chrétiens. — Il importe de les faire rentrer chez eux le plus tôt possible. Pour cela il faut d'abord aviser à l'ensevelissement des cadavres et à la reconstruction des maisons, puis subvenir aux besoins des nécessiteux et pourvoir à la sécurité de tous.

L'administration locale ayant déjà chargé six Comités distincts de procéder dans les différentes localités à l'évaluation des dommages, la Commission est d'avis de désigner six personnes de son choix qui pourront être adjointes à chacun des six Comités ou se réunir entre elles de façon à former un Comité distinct. Les six personnes déléguées par la Commission exercera un contrôle direct sur les actes des Comités auxquels il seront adjoints.

seront délivrés. Les Commissions mobiles parcourent les villages Druses et obtiennent, quoique peu, des objets qui serviront à ce but.

La terreur a amené le calme dans la Montagne; mais après une si grande agitation il faut quelque temps pour y rendre la sécurité absolue. Les dispositions sont prises pour couvrir les Chrétiens qui rentrent chez eux, et pour empêcher les conflits partiels qui peuvent se produire entre les deux populations, qui se trouvent aujourd'hui en force, l'une accusative et l'autre accusée.

Les six Comités institués par l'Administration Locale n'ont d'autre mission que de faire des évaluations sur les dépenses de reconstruction des maisons, évaluations qui serviront de base aux secours qu'on doit donner aux Chrétiens pour leur rétablissement. L'estimation des dommages est une autre question, pour laquelle on doit établir d'abord une base et un principe; l'enquête générale servira, comme il est dit plus haut, comme un point de départ pour l'estimation de ces dommages. Une fois que ce principe sera établi, la Commission suggérera à l'autorité le meilleur moyen de procéder à l'évaluation des dommages. Fuad Pacha est d'avis que le meilleur mode de procéder aux estimations sera la nomination par l'autorité de Commissions composées de jurés qui seront choisis par le Conseil de la province, et auxquelles seront admis deux délégués de chaque district dont les habitants ont éprouvé des dommages. Un Comité arbitre, qui sera nommé et choisi de la même manière, siègera à Beyrouth pour décider en dernier ressort sur les réclamations qui peuvent s'élever contre l'estimation des Commissaires. Quant aux dommages éprouvés par des étrangers des Commissions *ad hoc* seront nommées, et dans lesquelles les Consuls respectifs seront représentés par des délégués.

4. Suppression provisoire de la Caimacanie Druse.—La Commission a besoin de quelques explications sur cette mesure, dans le cas même où la nécessité en serait démontrée, attendu qu'aucun changement, même provisoire, dans l'organisation administrative du Liban ne saurait avoir lieu sans la participation et l'acquiescement des Grandes Puissances.

4. Suppression provisoire de la Caimacanie Druse.—L'arrestation préventive du Caimacam des Druses, et de quelques-uns des Moukatadjis, et la fuite des autres, qui sont déchus de leurs charges et droits d'après l'arrêté promulgué par Fuad Pacha, a laissé la Montagne Druse sans une administration régulière; elle se trouve actuellement sous le régime militaire en attendant la nouvelle organisation de la Montagne

qui se fera après entente avec les Grandes Puissances. On a dû, pour empêcher l'anarchie, et pour créer une autorité qui pourra veiller à la sécurité du pays, et surtout aux besoins des Chrétiens qui se réinstallent chez eux, établir une administration provisoire. Comme on ne pourrait en ce moment-ci songer à nommer un Caimacam choisi parmi les Druses, et sous-administrateurs des Moukatadjis, Fuad Pacha a décidé de partager cette Caimacanie en quatre cercles, d'établir dans chacun une administration municipale, et de mettre à leur tête un Mudir nommé par l'autorité; et il était à la veille de communiquer ces dispositions provisoires, contenues dans un règlement, dont le Délégué Ottoman est chargé de communiquer une copie à la Commission. Fuad Pacha s'occupe en ce moment-ci du choix des personnes qui seront nommées Mudirs; aussitôt qu'il aura choisi ces personnes il mettra en exécution ce règlement.

Annexe 2.

(Traduction.)

Règlement spécial établi provisoirement par le Commissaire Extraordinaire délégué pour organiser les affaires de Syrie. Ce règlement est destiné à être mis en vigueur dans la Caimacanie Druse dans les circonstances actuelles, comme sauvegarde des intérêts de l'Empire et des sujets jusqu'à ce que des dispositions générales, étudiées sous toutes leurs faces, aient été définitivement prises à l'effet d'assurer une parfaite tranquillité, à l'ombre de la justice de Sa Majesté, à tous les sujets de la Sublime Porte qui habitent la Montagne des Druses.

Article 1. La Caimacanie Druse, à laquelle on a adjoint seulement Deir-el-Kamar, a été divisée en quatre cercles: le premier se composant de Djebel-el-Rihan, du district de Djezzîn, pour chef-lieu; le deuxième, du Chouf Haïty, du Chouf Souweïdjany, et du district d'El Kharrout—chef-lieu Mokhtârah; le troisième de l'Arkoub, du Djourd, et du Menassif—chef-lieu Deir-el-Kamar; et le quatrième du Chahhur, du Haut et du Bas Gharb—chef-lieu Abeih. Chacun de ces cercles contient les Mokataa dont les noms et le nombre (de villages) sont inscrits dans le registre arrêté (du tems de Chekib Efendi).

Art. 2. Chaque cercle aura un Mudir nommé par l'autorité.

Art. 3. Il sera nommée auprès de chaque Mudir cinq adjoints ("Meawen") qui seront, sous la présidence de ce Mudir, les membres du Medjlis du cercle.

Art. 4. Cette Caimacanie renferme des habitants appartenant à quatre religions différentes—Musulmans, Chrétiens, Metualis, et Druses. Quand l'un des cercles renfermera des populations des quatre communautés, le nombre de l'une d'elles étant nécessairement supérieur aux autres, il sera choisi deux adjoints dans la communauté la plus nombreuse et trois dans les autres inférieures en nombre. Si dans l'un des cercles il n'y a que trois communautés au lieu de quatre, trois adjoints seront choisis dans la plus nombreuse et chacune des deux autres en formera un. Le cercle se compose-t-il de deux communautés seulement, la plus nombreuse fournira trois adjoints et l'autre deux. Si enfin le cercle ne renferme qu'une seule communauté les cinq adjoints seront puisés dans son sein.

Art. 5. L'élection des adjoints de chaque communauté se fera au moyen des Sheikhs (doyens) des villages appartenant à la dite communauté, c'est-à-dire, que les Sheikhs des villages d'une même communauté se réuniront en Conseil (Medjlis) et éliront les adjoints chargés de représenter leur communauté. Ces adjoints pourront être aussi bien des habitants du chef-lieu que des gens des villages. Les personnes à élire devront être honnêtes, dignes de confiance, et surtout ne s'être mêlées en aucune façon, soit aux derniers événements de la Montagne, soit à d'autres.

Art. 6. Le Medjlis du cercle ainsi composé aura pour mission de s'occuper des intérêts du pays, et il lui est accordé la faculté de juger les procès au même degré qu'un Medjlis de Cadha (sous-district).

Art. 7. Suivant l'importance des communautés de chacun des villages du cercle, il y aura un Sheikh pour chacune d'elles, et chaque Sheikh aura à son tour deux Moukhtars (Chefs de Quartier). Ces Sheikhs et Moukhtars auront à s'occuper ensemble des intérêts de leur communauté en arrangeant les affaires et les différences qui pourraient survenir entre leurs co-religionnaires.

Dans les villages dont la population est mixte, si une question d'un intérêt général pour le village venait à surgir, les Sheikhs et les Moukhtars de ce village auraient à se réunir pour s'occuper de la vider à l'amiable.

Tous les Sheikhs des communautés ainsi que les Moukhtars devront être choisis parmi les personnes qui ne se sont en aucune manière compromises ni dans les derniers événements ni dans tout autre.

Le Mudir délivrera à chacun d'eux un teskéré (diplôme) de "memour" (fonctionnaire).

Art. 8. Outre les troupes Impériales qu'il est indispensable d'établir sur les points de la Montagne jugés convenables dans le but de maintenir la tranquillité générale il sera employé dans chaque cercle suivant le besoin des soldats irréguliers qui seront au service des Mudirs respectifs. La moitié au moins de ces soldats sera prise parmi les habitants du cercle. Chaque communauté fournira son contingent en proportion de son importance.

No. 224.

Consul Brant to Lord J. Russell.—(Received November 2.)

(No. 31.)

My Lord,

Damascus, October 8, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to report to your Lordship that since my despatch No. 30 of the 5th instant matters here have not improved, but, on the contrary, the panic has gained a great hold on the Christians. Some of the principal, who wished to quit the city, were refused permission by the Government, and left clandestinely on the 6th instant.

The military Commander, Khaled Pasha, for some nights past has patrolled the streets, and last night ordered lanterns to be hung up before the houses at short distances. He has also ordered the gates separating the different quarters to be repaired, and the entrances of the city are carefully closed and guarded. Only half the troops pass the night in bed, the other half patrolling from sunset to sunrise. The guards are supplied with ball-cartridge, and are ordered, on the least symptom of a rising, to fire on the mob. The Artillery are always in readiness for action, and Colonel Gessler (a Prussian instructor of Artillery in the Turkish service) admits that no officer could do his duty better than Khaled Pasha.

Last night, however, houses inhabited by Christians were again marked with crosses; and this, with the measures of precaution taken, has renewed the panic to such an extent that a number of Christians came to the Consulate, this morning, to beg me to procure from the Government mules for them to quit, stating that their fears were so overwhelming that they may be said to be dying of them daily, for they cannot sleep or take any repose, being always harassed by the dread of a new massacre.

I used every argument I could to give them courage, but it was in vain: they said the men and women could walk, but the children could not; they required animals only for them. Finally, they declared that, if

nothing could be obtained, the men would go, leaving the women and children, the old and the sick, behind. People who, even under the worst circumstances, can decide on such a resolve, deserve but little consideration. I believe that there is no immediate danger.

I am informed that Sheik Abdallah el Halebee is allowed to receive any visitors he pleases in the room where he is detained, and consequently can carry on his machinations as well as if he were at liberty. His execution I consider to be a measure indispensable to the public security.

The conduct of Ibrahim Bey Karami, a Christian employé left here by Fuad Pasha to superintend the affairs of the Christians, but who pretends to be his Excellency's representative, is most infamous, and he should be immediately removed. He will not be controlled by the Vali Pasha, and liberates prisoners on his own responsibility. He is known to receive money as bribes to a large extent, and without a bribe justice cannot be obtained. In the matter of the recruiting, he issued 300 tickets of exemption at 20,000 piastres (or about 165*l.*) per head. Out of this number only about 80 or 90 are paid into the Treasury; the holders of the remaining tickets paying smaller sums, which are supposed to have gone into Ibrahim Bey's pocket.

The Jewish Rabbis have applied to me in respect to some Jews arrested on suspicion, and who have been detained in prison for nearly two months; one having already died there. The Rabbis demand that they should be brought to trial, and the Chief Rabbi offered to Ibrahim Karami his testimony that one of the prisoners was, all the time of the outbreak, in his house; to which Ibrahim Bey replied, "Your testimony is valueless, as they will all be condemned to death."

It is said that the cause of the present panic is mainly owing to the manner in which the Turks are dealing with the Druses. The Mushir marches about, and as fast as he moves from one place the Druses return. It is pretended that he expressly allows them a passage, and does not attempt to cut off their retreat to the Hauran.

The impression made by this conduct on the public is, the conviction that the Turks do not mean to punish the Druses, but leave them to act as they like—or, rather, that there is an understanding between them; so that people believe that the troops would not act hostilely against the Druses even in the case of an attack made by them on the city.

I have, &c.

(Signed) JAS. BRANT.

No. 225.

Consul Brant to Lord J. Russell.—(Received November 2.)

(No. 32.)

My Lord,

Damascus, October 15, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I addressed on the 11th instant to his Excellency Sir Henry L. Bulwer, reporting the particulars of my interview with his Excellency Fuad Pasha on the previous day.

I have, &c.

(Signed) JAS. BRANT.

Inclosure in No. 225.

Consul Brant to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Damascus, October 11, 1860.

IN reference to my despatch of the 8th instant, identic with No. 31 to Lord John Russell, I have the honour to inform your Excellency that at 9 o'clock yesterday morning a salute announced the arrival of Fuad Pasha. His Excellency came direct from Mokhtarah and took every one by surprise. I wrote immediately to congratulate his Excellency and to express my satisfaction at his opportune arrival, at the same time requesting to know

when it would be convenient for him to receive me; 4 P.M. was appointed. I went over every point of my despatch above referred to, and will now give his Excellency's explanations.

He admitted the existence of the panic, but could not see the least ground for it; he suspected it was the effect of intrigues working on the fears of the people, who had been so ill-treated that he could not wonder at their entertaining fears, nor could he blame them.

His Excellency suspected the crosses were the work of Christians who wanted to prevent the return of the Damascus refugees now at Beyrout, by propagating a panic here; he mentioned the conduct of the Greek Consular Agent here as most mischievous, and alluded remotely to others, by whom, although he did not designate, I understood him to mean the French and Russians.

His Excellency could not believe that the Mussulmans of Damascus would attempt a new émeute, or if they were bold enough, that it would be on the old plan.

He thought Khaled Pasha had taken up the matter too seriously; however, he did not blame him, as the error, if any, was on the side of excessive caution: still he considered that it had rather tended to increase the alarm.

I said that I could not but approve of Khaled Pasha's conduct, as the whole responsibility fell on him, the Vali being a complete nullity. I spoke on this point also, but Fuad Pasha appeared rather to avoid it, and a member of the Medjlis coming in I did not say more; nor could I mention the name of Sheikh Abdallah el Halebee. Soon after M. Outrey came in, when the member of the Medjlis retired.

Fuad Pasha repeated to M. Outrey what he had said to me. We both spoke of Ibrahim Bey Karami; the Pasha said he had already determined on dismissing him, as he had heard a bad report of him, and his conduct should be inquired into.

To-day I hear that Ibrahim Bey has been put under arrest.

We both also spoke about the Jews; his Excellency said that two had been condemned, the others should be liberated. The French Consul observed that the evidence had not been fairly given; it was entirely Christian, and that of others had been refused. The Rabbis requested that evidence in their favour should be received.

I told his Excellency what was said in reference to the conduct of the Mushir with regard to the Druses, as reported in my despatch. He said nothing could be more untrue: he himself had been with the Mushir, pursuing the Druses by night and by day, but the information given him always proved false, or else the Druses had notice of his intention, for none of the parties were ever found in the places indicated.

The peasantry among the Druses were not molested; the Chiefs only are seized when they can be caught.

His Excellency said that he had been for about twenty-four days marching about the Lebanon, trying to get hold of the chief Druses, but many were in inaccessible retreats among the rocks, but they would be forced to quit their hiding-places when the weather became severe, and then his Excellency expected to get them all into his power.

I begged that the arrears of the Government allowance due to the Christians might be paid up. This his Excellency said he would attend to.

Fuad Pasha was much fatigued by his night's march from Mokhtarrah, and it being late we could not protract our visit, nor could we decently have questioned his Excellency at that moment on his future movements and intentions.

I am happy to say that his Excellency's presence has spread a perfect calm over the previously troubled minds of the Christians.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JAS. BRANT.

No. 226.

Lord J. Russell to Lord Dufferin.

(No. 23.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, November 2, 1860.

IT appears from the 3rd Protocol of the International Commission in Syria, that the Commissioners have insisted upon their right personally to assist at the judicial inquiry into the conduct of the persons charged with having been parties to the late massacres, and have resisted the pretension of Fuad Pasha to exclude them; and I have to state to your Lordship that Her Majesty's Government entirely approve the course thus followed by the Commissioners.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 227.

Lord J. Russell to Earl Cowley.

(No. 1,099.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, November 7, 1860.

THE Marquis de Chateaurenard read to me a few days ago a despatch on the subject of Syria. M. Thouvenel in this despatch adverted to the escape of the Druse criminals, pointed out the facility with which they might return from the Hauran to commit fresh murders, and stated that the General in command of the French troops in Syria considered reinforcements of European troops, and a prolongation of the period of their stay beyond six months, to be necessary. M. Thouvenel wished to know the opinion of Her Majesty's Government upon these circumstances.

I told M. Chateaurenard that I fully admitted the evils which M. Thouvenel had pointed out; that Lord Dufferin's account of the escape of the Druse culprits through the lines of the Turkish army agreed with that of General Beaufort; that it was true these fierce chieftains might return and attack the Christians after the European troops should be withdrawn. But, I said, it is easier to agree as to the evil than to concert a remedy. I will reflect on the matter, and the opinion of the Government shall be communicated to Lord Cowley.

Upon further consideration there appear to Her Majesty's Government to be insuperable objections to a prolonged occupation of Syria by European troops. These troops were sent to Syria in consequence of frightful massacres which filled all Europe with horror. They went to support the Sultan's authorities in their task of restoring order, and punishing the principal criminals. By the activity of Fuad Pasha, and the energy of General Beaufort, this work of humanity and justice has been in great part accomplished. To keep the European troops there in order to hunt out other criminals in the caves and recesses of the mountains would be an endless, and indeed a hopeless work. To augment the European force, and maintain them in Syria with a view to prevent fresh outrages, would be to alter entirely the original purpose which the Sultan and the Five Powers had in view. What limit, either of numbers or of time, could be placed to such an occupation? It would soon degenerate into a transfer of the local Government of Syria to the Five Powers, and thus, instead of giving a useful example, well fitted to terrify the Mahometan fanatics, the European occupation would be a precedent for other occupations in Bulgaria, in Bosnia, and other Provinces, and thus lead the way to a partition of the Turkish Empire.

Her Majesty's Government would prefer, as a choice of evils, to see the Government of Syria restored to authorities named by or connected with the Porte, in the manner which the Mixed Commission shall consider most favourable to the future peace of Syria. The responsibility would then be left with the Porte, and to those who will derive their right to rule from the acknowledged Government of the country. No security, it is true, would be thus obtained against a recurrence of the conflicts of

Druses and Christians; but so long as the two races exist in the country, no permanent security can be obtained.

It is to be hoped, however, that the Conferences about to be instituted by the Representatives of the Five Powers at Constantinople may have for their result such amendments in the general administration of the Empire as may conduce to the firm establishment of order in Syria, as well as in other Provinces.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 228.

Major Fraser to Lord J. Russell.—(Received November 8.)

(No. 9.)

My Lord,

Damascus, October 20, 1860.

I VERY much regret that my communications to your Lordship have been interrupted by a severe illness of nearly a month's duration, induced by the unwholesome climate of Damascus at this season, and prolonged from the want of medical attendance. I am glad to be able to state that I am now nearly well, although still very weak.

During my illness I had the honour to receive Mr. Hammond's despatches of the 10th and 12th September, conveying to me the gratifying intelligence of your Lordship's satisfaction with my proceedings here, as reported up to the 23rd August, and desiring that I should remain in Syria until the 10th October. That period has already elapsed, and under ordinary circumstances I should feel it my duty to proceed at once to England. Having, however, been requested by Lord Dufferin, Her Majesty's Commissioner to Syria, to continue my duties as heretofore, on the ground that the interests of the public service required such a measure, more particularly during Mr. Brant's absence from Damascus, I had consented to do so, pending a reference to your Lordship.

As in any case I should not be equal to undertaking the journey to England until I had somewhat recovered my strength, I trust I shall not be considered to have overstepped the bounds of discretion, in complying with Lord Dufferin's request, until your Lordship's decision on this subject can be made known.

As regards myself personally, I desire to say that I am entirely at your Lordship's disposal, ready either to proceed to England or to continue my duties in Syria, as the interests of Her Majesty's service may demand.

Mr. Consul Brant quitted Damascus four days ago, for the purpose of joining Lord Dufferin at Beyrout, and I find that he has reported so fully to your Lordship on recent events that I can add little to his communications. Fuad Pasha is still in the city, and his presence has caused a total cessation of the recent panic among the Christians. These, however, notwithstanding a great improvement in their condition, continue to leave for Beyrout daily, selling their bedding, cooking utensils, and anything they possess, to procure the means of hiring an animal for the journey. They seem in many instances totally unable to recover from the effects of their intense terror and anxiety during the massacre, and neither assurances nor encouragement seem to influence them. Others are induced to leave by the Greek Consular Agent here, acting, doubtless, under instructions from his Government, which is well known to desire that the Christian refugees from Syria should emigrate to the unpeopled plains of Greece; while others still give as the cause of their alarm the release of so many prisoners by Fuad Pasha, although charged with the crime of murder, his Excellency stating in explanation that although these persons were imprisoned on such a charge, yet as their original accusers have never come forward again, he cannot keep them for ever in prison. The Christians also allege as another reason for alarm the apparent collusion between the Government and the Druses, and the evident determination of Fuad Pasha not to punish the Druse murderers; that they, therefore, can feel no security under a Government which

screens those by whom they have so cruelly suffered, and from whom, therefore, they have so much to fear for the future.

The field force recently employed in the Anti-Lebanon, near Hasbeya and Rasheya, for the ostensible purpose of cutting off the Druses from communication between the Lebanon and Hauran, have returned without, so far as I can learn, having taken a single prisoner. The troops are now quartered in villages in the neighbourhood of Damascus, and the Commander-in-chief (Helim Pasha) in the city.

In the meantime the Druses pass freely back from the Hauran to Lebanon; 300 horsemen under Milhem-el-Amad returned to their haunts in that range a few days ago, while upwards of 1,000 footmen were seen two days since also on their way back to Lebanon.

I have learned to-day that ten persons of position, some of whom were members of the late Great Council at the period of the outbreak, have been sent this morning to Beyrout under a guard. Having communicated with Fuad Pasha during the day, requesting to be favoured with information on the subject, I have at a late hour received the inclosed reply. Time will only permit me to remark upon this communication, to which I propose hereafter to revert, that Sheikh Abdallah-el-Halebi is viewed, by both Europeans and native Christians, as the chief instigator of the massacre at Damascus, and therefore deserving of death, and that the Mufti comes much under the same category.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. J. FRASER.

No. 229.

Lord J. Russell to Sir H. Bulwer.

(No. 614.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, November 8, 1860.

I TRANSMIT to your Excellency, for your information, a copy of a despatch which I have addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Paris,* explaining the opinion of Her Majesty's Government with regard to a proposed prolongation of the period fixed for the stay of French troops in Syria.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 230.

Lord Dufferin to Lord J. Russell.—(Received November 8.)

(No. 20.)

My Lord,

Beyrout, October 26, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Lordship's information, copies of seven further despatches which I have this day addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at the Porte.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 230.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, October 26, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that immediately upon the receipt of our identic instructions from Constantinople, in which we were informed that the right of assisting at the proceedings of the Extraordinary Tribunal erected at Beyrout had been conceded to us by the Porte, the Commission at once requested Abro Efendi, Fuad Pasha's

* No. 227.

delegate, and a member of the Court to favour them or their representatives with an order of admission.

To this demand Abro Efendi declined to accede until he should have referred the matter to Fuad Pasha, then at Damascus. At the next meeting of the Commission we were informed that his Excellency considered that our right of participation was confined to what he called "l'enquête générale," and did not extend to any judicial investigation. This view was vehemently combatted by all the Commissioners, and I ventured to state to Abro Efendi that having received instructions to attend the trials, I should consider it necessary formally to present myself at the doors of the Court-house, in order that the responsibility of refusing me admission might manifestly rest with the Turkish authorities. This intimation I was induced to make in consequence of information I had received as to the scandalous manner in which the trial of Said Bek Jumblat and the other prisoners was being conducted. I subsequently took occasion to press upon Abro Efendi the futility of Fuad Pasha's denying us a right the Porte had already conceded, and requested him to submit without delay to his Excellency the representation I had ventured to make upon the subject.

I am happy to be able to inform your Excellency that the remonstrances forwarded by the Commission were not without effect. The next Damascus mail brought us word that Fuad Pasha had consented to admit the Commissioners or their delegates as spectators of the proceedings of the Court, and I have accordingly requested Mr. Noel Moore to attend its sittings on my behalf, and have furnished him with instructions, a copy of which I have the honour to transmit for your Excellency's information.

In order, however, to render our intervention in these judicial proceedings really useful and effectual it would seem necessary that our delegates should have the privilege of suggesting to the Court whatever supplementary questions it may appear to them desirable should be addressed to the prisoner or the witnesses. As the members of the Tribunal will be prepared to quash any evidence at all discreditable to the Turkish Government, and even refuse to the prisoner whatever benefit he might derive from being able to prove he acted under instructions, the exigencies of justice would seem to require some such precaution being taken. At the same time it is undoubtedly a matter of great delicacy for a body foreign to the State to demand the liberty of, in any way, interfering with the action of a sovereign tribunal. Should such a grace be accorded to us, it perhaps could only be obtained by persuading his Excellency Fuad Pasha that it is in the interests of his Government that on this extraordinary occasion he should take advantage of every opportunity of satisfying Europe that the Porte has been anxious to provoke the fullest and fairest investigation.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 2 in No. 230.

Lord Dufferin to Vice-Consul Moore.

Sir,

Beyrout, October 15, 1860.

THE members of the Syrian Commission having been authorized by his Excellency Fuad Pasha to send Delegates to watch the proceedings of the Extraordinary Tribunal established at Beyrout, I have to request you to attend its sittings on my behalf.

You will present yourself on the occasion when it next assembles, and you will be careful to be present from the commencement to the close of each succeeding sitting until the trials shall be terminated.

You will take accurate and independent notes of everything which passes, which you will have the kindness to forward to me at the close of each day's proceedings. Should you remark any irregularities or partiality in the procedure of the Court, whether in a sense favourable or inimical to the accused, you will subjoin a memorandum on the subject at

the foot of your daily report. Should the impropriety which attracts your notice be of a nature to admit of correction on the spot, you will hand to the President of the Court a private communication calling his attention to the circumstance; but in the exercise of this function you will be careful not to transgress the bounds of due discretion. You will require copies of all documents handed into Court, whether by the prisoner or by the witnesses, to be communicated to you; and you will take every other measure your prudence can suggest to ensure the report you are commissioned to compose, being an ample and accurate representation of what takes place.

In conclusion, I would beg you to remember that you and your colleagues are admitted into Court for the express purpose of affording a guarantee to Europe that the judicial investigation with which the Tribunal is charged shall be conducted in such a way as to secure the accomplishment of the ends of justice. You will therefore apply the most searching scrutiny to the minutest details of its proceedings. You will follow the thread of the investigation with scrupulous vigilance; and you will note, for my information, any points which would tend, in your opinion, if more fully examined, to throw light on the causes which may have given rise to the late disturbances.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 3 in No. 230.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, October 26, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Excellency copy of a report I have received from Mr. Noel Moore, relative to the gross irregularity with which the trial of Said Bek Jumblat is being conducted by the Extraordinary Tribunal, before which he has been arraigned on the charge of high treason.

At the same time I also forward copy of a note I have addressed to his Excellency Fuad Pasha on the subject of Mr. Moore's complaints.

I trust that your Excellency will consider that in submitting to his Excellency so earnest a remonstrance, I have done no more than the exigencies of justice would seem to require. According to Mr. N. Moore's statement, confirmed as it has been by the report of Colonel Burnaby, copy of which I also inclose, it would seem that, guilty or not guilty, the members of the Court are determined on the prisoner's speedy ruin. This indecent precipitation on their part may be attributed to two motives.

In the first place, Said Bek Jumblat is a person of immense possessions, and the confiscation of his property would be an acceptable accession to Fuad Pasha's military chest; while, on the other hand, it is probable that if adequate facilities were given him, Said Bek would be in a position to make disclosures likely to compromise to a greater degree than ever the Turkish system and the Turkish authorities.

Although he certainly did not himself take part in any of the massacres, I cannot but believe that Said Bek was privy to all that occurred, and, had he chosen, might have prevented, or at all events have mitigated, the horror of what happened. Past experience shows that the Druses never act except under the inspiration of their Chiefs. Of these Chiefs, Said Bek was known to be the richest and the most influential. A letter has been produced, addressed to him by Ismail-el-Atrash, who led the Hauranese to Hasbeya and to the Bekâa, announcing his arrival and requesting instructions; and it is admitted that Said Bek received and entertained this same El Atrash for several days in his palace at Mokhtarab, when he returned red-handed from the slaughter of the Christians.

On the other hand, Said Bek, I am informed, would prove, if liberty were allowed him, that he rescued and sheltered many Christians, and was even heard to remonstrate with his followers against the outrages they

were committing. It might indeed be questioned whether the one was not a piece of acting, and the other a politic precaution; but be this as it may, the man ought to have an impartial trial, and the verdict should be in accordance with the nature of the evidence which can be adduced against him.

By a reference to my despatch of the 23rd instant, your Excellency will perceive that the securities for the administration of impartial justice for which I am now contending in reference to Said Bek's case I had already suggested should be accorded without distinction to all the prisoners awaiting their trial. Even then it had become evident that the Turks were prepared to throw Europe as many heads as she required. But if these precautions seemed so necessary in the case of Koorshid Pasha—one of themselves, a member of the Government, and a Moslem—how much more ought they to be insisted upon in reference to Said Bek and his fellows, aliens alike in race and in religion to those by whom they are to be judged.

Your Excellency may perhaps be led to remark in reference to the representation I have thought it right to make to Fuad Pasha on this subject, that it would have been more advisable if the Commission could have been induced to have united in a joint remonstrance; but I would venture to state, in justification of what I have done, that in consequence of the difficulty of finding trustworthy employés, as well as of the sickness which prevails, Prussia was not represented at all at the trial; the Delegate of Russia was a person imperfectly acquainted with the language; while the gentleman M. Béclard generally sends was obliged to absent himself on other business: so that the Commission was represented on the occasion referred to only by Mr. N. Moore and the Delegate of Austria. It was unadvisable, moreover, that a moment should be lost in bringing so important a subject under Fuad Pasha's notice.

In conclusion, I am happy to be able to inform your Excellency that I have received from Fuad Pasha a verbal intimation that the sitting of the Court shall be at once adjourned; that Said Bek shall be furnished with the *procès-verbaux* of each day's proceedings, with liberty to supply any omissions he may detect in them, as well as to state in writing whatever complaint he may have to make against the mode in which his case is being conducted; while, for the future, greater care will be taken to secure him and his witnesses an impartial hearing.

The case of Husni Bek, who is allowed to act as Judge, when his proper place would be the dock, having been already taken up by the Commission, I thought it prudent to reserve until our next meeting, which has been delayed for a couple of days at Fuad Pasha's request.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 4 in No. 230.

Vice-Consul Moore to Lord Dufferin.

My Lord,

Beyrout, October 23, 1860.

I DEEM it my duty to inform your Lordship that the trial of Said Bek Jumblat by the Extraordinary Commission is not conducted in a spirit of impartiality. Points in the evidence of witnesses favourable to the accused are not inserted in the minutes of the proceedings; much of what he himself states in his defence is likewise omitted. He is not allowed sufficient time to challenge the allegations of the witnesses; whilst every statement made by him reflecting upon the conduct of the Ottoman functionaries are harshly, though indirectly, repressed.

Under these circumstances, it is not surprising that Said Bek should to-day, at a certain stage of the proceedings, have risen, and loudly complaining of the manner generally in which the inquiry was conducted, announced his firm resolve to answer no more questions, or appear again before the Commission, who, he said, might henceforward act and decide as they thought fit.

Whilst Said Bek was still speaking, the arrival of his Excellency Fuad Pasha was announced to the members of the Commission, and the sitting abruptly terminated.

I have, &c.
(Signed) NOEL T. MOORE.

Inclosure 5 in No. 230.

Extract from a Report addressed by Lieutenant-Colonel Burnaby to Lord Dufferin.

October 23, 1860.

1. IN the event of a witness failing to give his evidence, or answer a question in a manner suitable to the evidence required to be adduced by the Court to convict the prisoner;

2. Or in the event of such evidence implicating or reflecting upon the officials of the Porte during the late massacres;

3. Or in the event of such evidence, or answer not being sufficiently strong in language against the prisoner; the following modes are then pursued by the Court to carry out their object—

(A.) The witness is conversed with until he is made to understand what evidence the Court desire of him; in some instances the witness will thus become induced to state diametrically opposite to what he had originally stated.

(B.) Or in the event of a witness adhering to his original statement which will occur, then the official scribe, will, in taking down the answer or evidence, pursue one of the three following modes:

(a.) Either he will cause the question and answer to be omitted altogether from the proceedings;

(b.) Or he will cause only a portion of the answer or evidence to be entered in the proceedings;

(c.) Or he will cause an entirely different construction to be put upon the sense at variance with what the witness had testified.

4. In the event of any evidence tending to exculpate the prisoner, it is almost invariably omitted from being inserted in the proceedings.

5. Sometimes several witnesses are in court, under examination at the same time.

6. All favourable testimony has been almost invariably excluded from the depositions.

7. The prisoner is excluded from Court while the witnesses are examined, and although on his return the depositions are handed to him for perusal, the above-mentioned manner of taking the depositions greatly tends to diminish the benefit he would otherwise have derived by cross-examination.

8. The prisoner has no Counsel or Representative in Court to watch the proceedings on his behalf while so excluded.

9. The animus of the Court is patent to all observers and especially that of one of its members, Colonel Hosni Bek, late Commander of the Imperial troops at Baalbek.

Inclosure 6 in No. 230.

Lord Dufferin to Fuad Pasha.

Excellency,

Beyrout, October 25, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to inclose, for your Excellency's information, copy of a report I have received from Mr. Noel Moore, Her Britannic Majesty's Vice-Consul, and my delegate to your Excellency's tribunal of Beyrout, relative to the unsatisfactory manner in which the trial of Said Bek Jumblat is being conducted, and I most earnestly request your Excellency to give to the statements it contains your attentive consideration.

If the proceedings continue to be carried on in the manner described

by Mr. Moore, the sentence of the Court, whatever it may be, will be vitiated by a method of procedure so flagrantly opposed to what a sense of impartial justice would dictate.

I need not add that in submitting this remonstrance to your Excellency's consideration I am actuated by no desire to screen Said Bek Jumblat. If it should be proved that he is guilty of the crimes imputed to his charge, I should be the last person to urge your Excellency to use towards him an ill-timed lenity; but I would venture to observe that the graver the offence and the severer the penalty attached to it, the more scrupulous ought the tribunal to be to conduct its investigation with the most absolute impartiality.

The force of this consideration is enhanced a hundredfold when, as on the present occasion, the prisoner is allowed no advocate. If, indeed, I might venture to hazard a suggestion in reference to this point, I should be inclined to say that the ends of justice would be best secured by the accused being allowed to select a Representative or Riaza to conduct his case for him.

This privilege is accorded even to prisoners tried by courts-martial, whose procedure is the most summary of any known to European law.

Although I am sure your Excellency will agree with me in thinking that it would be superfluous I should corroborate the accuracy of the facts stated in so formal a manner by Mr. Moore, I have thought it as well to inclose for your Excellency's further information a statement with which I have been furnished by Colonel Burnaby, completely confirmatory of everything reported by Mr. Moore.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 7 in No. 230.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, October 26, 1860.

WITH reference to my previous despatch of the 1st instant, I have the honour to inform your Excellency that, after having caused a most careful inquiry to be made among the Damascene families now resident in Beyrout, I cannot discover that a single woman, girl, or child is missing.

The investigation has been conducted by means of the most trustworthy agents I could procure, and I have been assisted in my researches by the priests of the various sects, as well as by the Sheiks of the different trades and quarters. The close intimacy which subsists in the East between all the families composing a religious denomination, as well as the gossiping habits of Orientals, renders the search after any individual a far easier matter than it would be in a European town, where the habits of domestic privacy are more jealously maintained; consequently I have no doubt whatever but that had a member of any family been missing, the method of inquiry which has been adopted would have brought the fact to my knowledge.

I think, therefore, your Excellency may rest assured that, with the exception of the one little child whose case I have already brought under your notice, no Damascene woman, girl, or boy remains within the power of the Moslem.

I regret to be obliged to add, however, that a great proportion of the Christian girls, now living with their mothers, are discovered to be with child by those who ravished them during the late disturbances.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 8 in No. 230.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, October 26, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that, on the 24th instant, 252 additional French soldiers landed at Beyrout.

It appears that, up to the 1st of October, the number of French troops in Syria amounted to 7,207 men; of these about fifty have since died, the average of mortality being two men a-day, so that the actual force at this amounts to about 7,400 men, and of these 615 are in hospital. A further addition of 248 soldiers to the present army is daily expected.

I need not call your Excellency's attention to the fact that the reinforcements which have from time to time arrived, are out of all proportion to the ratio of loss sustained by disease.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 9 in No. 230.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, October 26, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to inclose, for your Excellency's information, copy of instructions I have addressed to Lieutenant-Colonel Burnaby and Mr. Jules Ferrette relative to their duties as members of two of the Mixed Commissions appointed by Fuad Pasha to superintend the reconstruction of the burnt villages of the Lebanon.

In explanation of the above I have to state that immediately on his arrival in the Mountain Fuad Pasha divided the pillaged districts into eight circles, to each of which he appointed a native Commission, whose duty it was to adjudicate on the amount of money which each householder could claim as necessary for the re-building of his dwelling.

Great complaints were made to the European Commissioners of the indolence, partiality, and injustice with which these functionaries executed their task. I therefore proposed that each of us should designate a representative, who should be nominated by the country of Fuad Pasha, to serve respectively on each of these Commissions.

The project was unanimously adopted, but, I regret to say, has not been acted upon with the energy that was to be desired. Great difficulties were discovered in finding fit persons to represent the Commissioners, and an inadequate idea seemed to be entertained as to the urgency of the occasion.

The consequence has been that at this moment scarcely anything has been done towards providing against the rigours of the winter. Already the nights in the Mountain are becoming intensely cold. Women and children, suffering from fever and insufficiently clad, are obliged to sleep in the open air. Sickness is everywhere increasing, and the prospect for the next four months is very lamentable.

Under these circumstances, I have determined to request the two gentlemen above-mentioned, who have kindly volunteered their services, to commence operations at once in the two districts which Fuad Pasha has assigned to them, and I am in great hopes that their exertions and intelligence will avert, at all events over a certain area, the pernicious results of such ill-timed delay.

At the same time I have no hesitation in saying that the approaching crisis is equal in gravity, though, of course, not in proportion, to that which overtook Ireland in the winter of 1846-47.

The recipients of relief on the lists of the Anglo-American Committee have increased during the last three weeks from 19,000 to 25,000. The villages are uninhabitable; no preparations are being made for the harvest of next year.

This miserable prospect I have brought under the notice of Fuad Pasha in the most energetic language I could command. But the truth is, his Excellency is powerless. He has neither money nor agents. He

cannot pay for wood nor labour. He cannot find an individual to whom he can safely entrust a sixpence for distribution.

Under these circumstances I do not know what is to be done. If a loan could be guaranteed by England and France to be applied under the supervision of a European Commission of Control to the immediate requirements of the Christian population of Syria, the difficulties of the situation might be overcome; but this is a suggestion beyond my province to make.

I will simply content myself with drawing your Excellency's attention to the condition of our affairs.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 10 in No. 230.

Lord Dufferin to Colonel Burnaby and the Rev. Jules Ferrette.

Sir,

Beyrout, October 24, 1860.

HIS Excellency Fuad Pasha having consented to the request of the Commissioners that a European Delegate designated by themselves should serve on each of the Native Commissions appointed by the Porte to superintend the reconstruction of the burnt villages of the Lebanon, I would venture to request that in accordance with the offer of service you have been good enough to volunteer, you should at once put yourself into communication with Abro Effendi, and enter upon the discharge of your duties as an adlatus to whichever of the above-mentioned Commissions it should be considered advisable to appoint you.

I have further the honour to inform you that your expenses while serving on the above Commission will be paid.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 11 in No. 230.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, October 26, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Excellency copy of an extract from a private letter I have received from the Rev. Mr. Robson, relative to the present condition and future prospects of the Christian population of Damascus, as I consider it will convey to your Excellency a clearer and juster insight into the position of their affairs than anything I myself could write upon the subject.

Mr. Robson, as you are perhaps aware, is a Protestant missionary, who has been a resident at Damascus for the last eighteen years. He is a person of judgment, calmness, and discretion, and his opinion on the subject to which he refers is perhaps more deserving of attention than that of any other European in the country. His letter was written in answer to one from myself, in which I had requested him to state his deliberate opinion as to whether it was advisable to urge those of the Damascenes who had taken refuge in Beyrout to return to their native city.

In order as far as possible to secure a reply, undisturbed by the spirit of disquietude, which seemed to me to prevail to an unreasonable extent among the European residents of Damascus, I particularly warned him against the dangers likely to result from a continuation of the exodus, and entreated him to do what he could to put an end to the panic, which the circumstances of the case, in my opinion, no longer justified.

I think your Excellency will perceive that Mr. Robson has treated the subject I submitted to his consideration with a calmness and deliberation which cannot fail to inspire confidence in his opinion.

His appreciation of the feelings of the Christian population has been amply confirmed by what has subsequently taken place. Since the 4th of October more than 1,200 souls have quitted Damascus, in spite of all

that has been done by the British Consulate and by Mr. Robson himself to induce them to remain.

Every day fresh drafts of refugees are arriving, and Mr. Brant informs me that, on the morning he left the city, he was informed that persons almost destitute had paid a greater price for mules than he himself, in order to effect their escape without delay.

It is to be observed, moreover, that this desire to remove from Damascus continues in spite of Fuad Pasha's unexpected return to the city, and the arrest of 230 persons, among whom is to be numbered Abdallah Bey el Halebi, a most influential Moslem, and other rich and notorious individuals.

Mr. Robson states that if the Government would commence the payment of a sufficient indemnity a restoration of confidence might be the result. This remedy, however, cannot be applied, inasmuch as Fuad Pasha is absolutely penniless, and whatever sums he can scrape together would be insufficient even to roof the villages of the Lebanon.

I myself am convinced that, for the present, the Christians of Damascus may consider their personal safety as secured. I cannot believe that there is any danger of a second outbreak as long as Fuad Pasha and his troops remain in the country.

The enmity of the Moslem to the Christian is probably greater than ever, but it is impossible to imagine that, childishly reckless as is the Syrian population, a repetition of the past should take place under the nose of the "Father of the Cord," as his Excellency Fuad Pasha has been lately christened.

What may happen when the attention of the Porte and of Europe is withdrawn from Syria, when the Turkish troops are required in another part of the Empire, when the European force is gone, and the Christians are denuded of all material protection, is another question. Even then I am disposed to think they might be safe; Pashas' heads have been proved to sit too lightly on their shoulders for the future Governors of the city not to be careful to maintain order, but it will be difficult, if not impossible, to persuade the Christians themselves that such may probably be the case.

If, indeed, we were dealing with reasonable beings, some dependence might be placed on the influences which usually determine the conduct of mankind; but the stupidity of Turkish officials, and the unthinking folly of these Orientals, are such disturbing elements in the calculation, that nothing can be predicted with any certainty when the two are to be brought into combination.

In despite of reason it is impossible even now not to look forward with anxiety to the few weeks of winter, when the snow will cut Damascus off from regular communication with the coast. I should not have the slightest hesitation, were it necessary, in shutting myself up in the city during that period: at the same time, I am convinced that even Fuad Pasha will feel relieved when the road shall be re-opened, and he hears that nothing has happened during the interim.

An idea has occurred to me in regard to the manner in which the Damascenes may be ultimately provided for, should all happier solutions of the difficulty fail; but it involves a change of so extreme and unusual a description that I have some hesitation in submitting it to your Excellency's consideration; nevertheless, as you have been good enough to encourage me to write to you without reserve, I shall make bold to mention it.

The late massacres at Damascus may be said to have possessed this peculiar characteristic,—they were essentially a criminal attempt by Islamism on Christianity. Independently, therefore, of the punishment inflicted on the individual authors of what has taken place, Europe, as it has the power, so has it the right, to inflict on Islam some signal and permanent mark of its displeasure.

Might not, then, the double object of securing an asylum for the refugees, and of exacting from their persecutors an appropriate retribution be accomplished, by our requiring that this should be made the occasion for the restoration to Christendom of the city of Jerusalem; and

that the fugitives from Damascus should be established in the quarter which its Moslem population shall be invited to vacate? In the streets of its holiest city, Islam has poured out Christian blood like water. Of so great a crime the forfeiture of Jerusalem would be no inappropriate memorial.

In venturing to submit to your Excellency so startling a proposition, I feel that I am, perhaps, transgressing the bounds of due discretion. I am well aware that many considerations may be urged against the practicability of such a scheme. The municipal constitution of the new community would offer almost insuperable difficulties.

It may be urged that so violent a measure instead of quelling would only exasperate the fanaticism of the Syrian population.

Neither, perhaps, would it be expedient that the final result of all that has taken place should be the undisputed domination of Mahometanism in Damascus.

It is to be hoped, moreover, that the efforts we are making to check the exodus of the Christians, and to disperse the unreasonable misgivings they entertain, may ere long begin to be successful, and that further deliberation will enable us to discover some satisfactory securities for their future repose.

Be that, however, as it may, though with some hesitation, I am still inclined to suggest to your Excellency whether the present occasion might not be a fitting opportunity for entering into arrangements which may put an end to the scandal involved in the present condition of the sacred city of our faith.

The relations in which it is proposed that Rome should stand in respect to the new Kingdom of Italy, may be discovered to present an analogy not altogether inapplicable.

I have, &c.

(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 12 in No. 230.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Beyrout, October 26, 1860.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Excellency's information, copy of the procès-verbal, with its inclosures, of the fourth sitting of the Syrian Commission, held on the 15th instant.

I have, &c.

(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 13 in No. 230.

Protocol of the Fourth Meeting of the Syrian Commission, held at Beyrout, October 15, 1860.

CEJOURD'HUI Lundi, quinze Octobre, mil huit cent soixante, la Commission Internationale, assistée d'Abro Efendi, délégué Ottoman, s'est réunie à Beyrout sous la présidence de M. de Weckbecker, Commissaire d'Autriche.

La séance ayant été ouverte à deux heures moins un quart, le procès-verbal est lu et adopté. A l'occasion du paragraphe relatif à la formation d'un Comité directeur chargé de diriger l'action des divers Comités de Secours, la Commission prend acte de ce qu'un Comité Russe vient d'être constitué et de ce que le Comte Bentivoglio a été invité par son Gouvernement à présider le Comité Français.

M. de Rehues rappelle que la Commission a décidé que ses délégués seraient adjoints par elle aux Comités d'Evaluation envoyés par le Gouvernement dans les divers districts de la Montagne.

Abro Efendi répond que ces Comités ont été formés, non pour régler la question des indemnités, mais pour faire en sorte que les Chrétiens puissent être réinstallés chez eux le plus tôt possible. Quant aux délégués de la Commission ils ne pourraient être admis dans les Comités qu'à titre officieux: désignés par la Commission ils seraient nommés par le Gouvernement.

Lord Dufferin désirait savoir combien de personnes ont été secourues jusqu'à présent, combien de maisons relevées, combien de villages reconstruits. Abro Efendi promet, pour la séance suivante, des renseignements précis à ce sujet.

M. Novikow demande si des mesures ont été prises pour la réinstallation des Chrétiens de l'Anti-Liban. Il doute que, vu la saison avancée, et le peu de sécurité de leur pays, ces Chrétiens puissent être réintégrés dans leurs foyers dans le courant de cette année.

Abro Efendi répond qu'on va s'en occuper, et que, en attendant, les Chrétiens dont il s'agit sont réfugiés à Beyrout, à Saïda, et à Sür. En réponse à de nouvelles interpellations de M. de Rehues et de Lord Dufferin, Abro Efendi assure que les secours distribués par le Gouvernement n'ont jamais été suspendus; ces secours sont accordés aux habitants de Rasheya, Hasbeya, Deir-el-Kamar, et Damas. La dépense qui en résulte s'élève à environ 500,000 ou 600,000 piastres par mois, indépendamment des autres frais.

Lord Dufferin exprime le désir qu'à l'ouverture de chaque séance il soit rendu compte à la Commission, tant par le Gouvernement que par le Comité Directeur récemment formé, des secours distribués de part et d'autre, ainsi que des mesures prises pour rétablir les Chrétiens dans leurs villages.

M. de Rehues appelle de nouveau l'attention de ses collègues sur les Comités d'Evaluation. Il pense que les personnes adjointes à ces Comités auront au moins le droit de faire valoir les réclamations qui leur seront présentées.

Abro Efendi répond que ces personnes auront les mêmes droits que les autres membres des Comités.

Il entre ensuite dans de nouvelles explications sur la mission confiée aux Comités, composés d'hommes spéciaux, qui ne s'occupent en aucune façon du règlement des indemnités. Que si, ajoute-t-il, la Commission veut bien lui désigner six personnes de son choix, il s'empressera de les faire nommer.

Il est décidé que cette désignation aura lieu dans la séance suivante.

M. Novikow demande si à l'approche de l'époque où l'on a coutume de récolter les olives, l'autorité a pris des mesures pour assurer cette récolte aux environs de Hasbeya.

Abro Efendi croit qu'en effet des mesures ont été prises à cet égard.

Le Délégué Ottoman dépose sur le bureau (1) une copie de la lettre qui lui a été adressée de Damas par Fuad Pacha; (2) une note reproduisant *in extenso* les paroles prononcées par lui dans la troisième séance pour annoncer le départ de Fuad Pacha.

Il est décidé, sur sa demande, que ces deux documents seront annexés au présent procès-verbal.

Abro Efendi déclare, en outre, être prêt à répondre à diverses interpellations qui lui ont été adressées dans les séances précédentes.

Relativement à Shakir Pacha, auquel M. Novikow regrette qu'on eût laissé la faculté de se rendre à Constantinople, Abro Efendi, d'après les informations officielles qu'il a reçues, fait savoir que cet officier a été acquitté, à Damas, par le même Conseil de Guerre qui a prononcé la condamnation à mort de l'ex-Mushir Ahmed Agha. La communication des dossiers éclairera la Commission sur les détails de l'acquiescement de Shakir Pacha.

Quant à Nûri Bek, sur lequel le Commissaire Français avait appelé la sévérité du Gouvernement, Abro Efendi croit pouvoir répéter ce qu'il avait déjà dit, à savoir, que cet officier avait été mandé à Beyrout en vertu d'une décision du Tribunal Extraordinaire.

L'interrogatoire subi depuis lors par Nûri Bek n'ayant pas satisfait le tribunal, il a été mis en état d'arrestation.

En ce qui concerne Hosni Bek, aucune accusation n'a jamais été élevée contre cet officier, qui s'étant conduit avec honneur et droiture dans le procès des officiers à Damas, a été appelé à siéger dans le Conseil Extraordinaire de Beyrout. Toutefois M. Bédard est prié de faire connaître les charges qui pèseraient sur lui, afin que si elles étaient fondées le tribunal en fût immédiatement saisi.

Pour ce qui est des assertions de M. Bécлар touchant la nécessité d'atteindre les vrais coupables à Damas et de faire en sorte que la justice reprenne son cours, Abro Efendi se dit en mesure d'informer la Commission que le Tribunal Extraordinaire siégeant à Damas n'a pas un moment ralenti ses travaux, et qu'il les continue sans relâche en étendant ses poursuites aux individus qui lui sont dénoncés par les Chrétiens, ou dont la culpabilité résulte des déclarations faites par les autres accusés. Plusieurs exécutions même ont eu lieu pendant l'absence de Fuad Pacha. Les personnes auxquelles M. Bécлар faisait sans doute allusion, à savoir, les membres du Conseil, ainsi que la plupart des notables du pays, ont été arrêtés dans le temps et mises en accusation; mais jusqu'à présent, et malgré les recherches les plus minutieuses, aucune preuve n'a pu être fournie contre elles.

A défaut de preuves suffisantes pour leur condamnation, on les expulsera de Damas à perpétuité.

Abro Efendi est également autorisé à annoncer que Fuad Pacha, tout en réservant l'opinion de son Gouvernement, ne s'oppose pas à ce que les membres de la Commission ou leurs délégués assistent aux audiences du Tribunal Extraordinaire de Beyrouth. Les étrangers de distinction pourront même y être admis et se convaincre, comme les Commissaires eux-mêmes, de la régularité avec laquelle procède le tribunal.

La Commission accepte le bénéfice de cette solution, tout en réservant à son tour la question de principe.

Il est convenu que, dès le lendemain, les Commissaires ou leurs délégués pourront assister à l'audience: s'ils ont quelques observations à faire sur la marche de la procédure, ils présenteront ces observations dans le sein de la Commission, soit au Commissaire Extraordinaire de la Sublime Porte, soit à son délégué.

Le Commissaire Français dit avoir reçu du Consul de France à Damas un rapport en réponse aux questions qu'il lui avait posées après s'être concerté à ce sujet avec ses collègues. Il donne lecture de quelques passages de ce rapport dans lequel M. Outrey après avoir dépeint l'état toujours précaire de la population Chrétienne, signale les méfaits d'un certain Ibrahim Karami, accorde des louanges à l'activité du Commandant militaire Khaled Pacha, et critique l'application intelligente de la mesure relative au rachat du service militaire moyennant une contribution de 20,000 piastres.

Abro Efendi fait observer qu'Ibrahim Karami vient d'être mis en état d'arrestation par ordre de Fuad Pacha.

Il annonce également à la Commission que le Plénipotentiaire Ottoman doit arriver prochainement à Beyrouth, où il aura l'honneur de présider l'une des séances suivantes. D'après les nouvelles les plus récentes, la situation de Damas serait aussi satisfaisante que possible. Toutes les mesures sont prises pour calmer l'inquiétude des Chrétiens et pour abattre les Druses.

M. Novikow demande quelle suite a été donnée au projet de désarmement général.

Abro Efendi pense que Fuad Pacha est fermement décidé à le mettre à exécution.

A la demande de M. Bécлар, le délégué Ottoman entre ensuite dans quelques détails sur le procès de Khurshid Pacha et sur celui de deux autres principaux inculpés, Vasfi Efendi et Ahmed Efendi.

La séance est levée à trois heures un quart.

(Suivent les signatures.)

Annexe 1.

Le paragraphe suivant devait figurer dans le Protocole de la troisième séance:—

"FUAD PACHA ayant appris qu'une panique s'était emparée des Chrétiens de Damas, a décidé de partir pour cette ville, et je crois qu'il y est à l'heure qu'il est.

"Quoique le Plénipotentiaire du Sultan ait reçu des autorités militaires et civiles de Damas les assurances les plus positives sur le maintien de la tranquillité, assurances qui s'appuient d'une part sur la force suffisante qui se trouve dans la ville, et sur la présence d'autre part de Halim Pacha à quatre heures de distance de Damas, a néanmoins désiré de s'y rendre en personne dans le seul but de tranquilliser par sa présence les esprits qui s'étaient alarmés à son grand étonnement.

"Son désir de donner de plus près une direction à la poursuite des coupables Druses récelés du côté du Haurân n'est pas étranger à son départ pour Damas."

Annexe 2.

Fuad Pasha to Abro Effendi.

Damas, le 10 Octobre, 1860.

Mon cher Abro,

COMME je vous le disais dans ma première lettre je suis parti de Mokhtarah hier dans la matinée, et après une course de vingt-quatre heures je suis arrivé à Damas. J'ai trouvé la ville dans un état de tranquillité aussi satisfaisant que lorsque je l'ai quitté.

Les rumeurs et les bruits que l'on a fait courir sur une soi-disant fermentation de la population ne sont que le résultat des intrigues. Un bon nombre de Chrétiens que j'ai questionné m'ont avoué que les signes de croix que l'on avait fait sur les maisons des Chrétiens, au lieu de provenir des Musulmans, sont plutôt l'œuvre de quelques uns des leurs qui désirent partir pour Beyrouth ou qui voudraient y retenir leurs proches et leurs amis, et qui font des machinations pour répandre la terreur parmi leurs co-religionnaires et les entraîner à l'émigration.

Veillez donner tous ces détails à MM. les Commissaires et aux personnes qui vous entourent, et ajoutez, s'il vous plaît, que j'ai été réellement satisfait du calme qui règne dans la ville que j'ai reconnu l'inutilité et la superfluité de certaines mesures militaires, un peu sévères, qui ont été adoptées.

Agréé, &c.
(Signé) FUAD.

No. 231.

Acting Consul Wrench to Lord J. Russell.—(Received November 9.)

(No. 35.)

Damascus, October 20, 1860.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to report to your Lordship, that since the departure of Mr. Consul Brant on the 17th ultimo, the Christians continue to leave Damascus for Beyrouth in great numbers.

As reported in Mr. Brant's despatches Nos. 30 and 31, the late panic made all wish to quit the city; and now that the Government has begun to pay up the arrears of their allowance, the money is used to hire animals.

It is generally believed that the fears of the Christians are worked upon by intriguers at Beyrouth. The fact of a number of prisoners having been lately released by the Government has also tended to increase their alarm.

The Greek Consular Agent here has advised all under his protection to leave as soon as they can, adding that he does not intend to remain at Damascus. This has the most pernicious effect on the minds of the Christians; for when they see an European Agent advising their departure, they believe themselves to be in immediate danger, and sell the beds, copper, &c., provided them by the Government, with the proceeds of which they hire mules.

Khaled Pasha has replaced the Mushir as Commandant of the army in the field, and is now at the village of Katana, about four hours to the west of the city. The Mushir remains in Damascus.

Shukri Pasha, the new Rais of the troops, arrived here on the 15th ultimo.

Two brothers—Assaad and Fares Amer—Druses of the Ladjah, the former of whom has lately been employed by Fuad Pasha on the recommendation of the French Consul, have been decorated by his Excellency with the Order of the Medjidie.

Last night Abdallah Bey el Adam, Nakeeb Efendi, Abd el Kader Bey, and Abd el Hadi Efendi el Omari, members of the Great Medjlis, who had been let out of confinement on parole, were again taken. These, with the Mufti, Ghuzzee Efendi, Hassibi Efendi, Ali Bey el Adam, Abdullah Bey, son of Nassouh Pasha, all of the Great Medjlis, and Sheikh Abdullah el Halebee, were sent this morning to Beyrout, under a guard of soldiers, on their way to Cyprus, where they are to be imprisoned. A few days before Mr. Brant's departure Fuad Pasha informed him that this sentence was on the point of being carried into effect. The trials of these persons having taken place in private, it is not generally known of what they were found guilty.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WILLIAM H. WRENCH.

No. 232.

Sir H. Bulwer to Lord J. Russell.—(Received November 9.)

(No. 711.)

My Lord,

Therapia, October 31, 1860.

MR. BRANT will have sent to your Lordship a copy of his despatch of the 25th ultimo, which is worthy of your Lordship's notice.

I have the honour to forward herewith a copy of the reply which I sent him to that despatch, requesting him to furnish me with his ideas as to the reorganization of Turkish administration in Syria.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY L. BULWER.

Inclosure in No. 232.

Sir H. Bulwer to Consul Brant.

Sir,

Therapia, October 20, 1860.

I HAVE read through your despatch of the 25th ultimo with the attention which it deserves.

In two essential points I entirely agree with you: the one, that there should be a general reorganization of the Ottoman Government in Syria (you can give me your ideas as to how this can be most practically effected); secondly, I concur with you also as to the necessity of some step being taken with regard to the caravan that goes annually to Mecca.

In regard to the punishments, there are certain considerations to bear in mind: first, a person in a locality is sometimes too much impressed by local circumstances; secondly, some attention must be paid to the difficult position of the Porte's Commissioner, who, if he produced a strong Mussulman feeling of indignation—I do not mean merely on the spot, but in general—might produce a Mussulman outbreak dangerous in its character, wide in its effects, and for a time uncontrollable. The consequences might be most serious, both as to the lives and property of Christians and the general fate of the Empire.

Though the death of 150 persons seems small, in comparison to the massacres that have taken place, it is still a very large number of persons to be executed.

If, however, any particular individual, however highly placed amongst the religious body of Mussulmans, has rendered his conduct suspicious, justice should be done, and the facts reported to Lord Dufferin.

In other matters, you must, generally, consider that it is the Ottoman

Government, though greatly modified and improved, that has to be established; and that fanaticism on the one side is to be repressed as much as on the other.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY L. BULWER.

No. 233.

Lord J. Russell to Sir H. Bulwer.

(No. 620.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, November 10, 1860.

I HAVE received from Lord Dufferin a copy of his despatch to your Excellency of the 26th of October, inclosing a letter from a gentleman at Damascus relative to the present condition and future prospects of the Christian population of that city; and I have to state that the Porte would do well to call upon Fuad Pasha to state his views as to the course which should be taken to remedy the unsatisfactory state of things at Damascus, and as to the measures which should be taken hereafter for the safety of the Christians in Syria when the foreign forces are withdrawn.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 234.

The Secretary to the Admiralty to Mr. Hammond.—(Received November 10.)

Sir,

Admiralty, November 8, 1860.

I AM commanded by my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to send you herewith, for the information of Her Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, a copy of a letter from Vice-Admiral Martin, dated the 18th ultimo, with extracts of the orders he has given to Captain Heathcote, of Her Majesty's ship "Doris," the senior officer of Her Majesty's ships and vessels left on the coast of Syria.

I am, &c.
(Signed) C. PAGET.

Inclosure 1 in No. 234.

Vice-Admiral Martin to the Secretary to the Admiralty.

My Lord,

"Marlborough," Island of Candia, October 18, 1860.

AS it may be desirable that the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty should be acquainted with the instructions under which the senior officer on the coast of Syria is acting, I have the honour to transmit a copy, to be laid before their Lordships.

I am, &c.
(Signed) W. F. MARTIN.

Inclosure 2 in No. 234.

Orders addressed to Captain Heathcote.

By William Fanshawe Martin, Esq., M.P., &c.

BEING about to proceed to Corfu with the ships-of-the-line here assembled, you will be left as senior officer on the coast of Syria, with the ships named in the margin* under your orders, and upon my parting company you will take them under your command accordingly.

The objects of a British squadron being on this coast are, the protection of the lives and property of Christians, and also British interests and commerce.

With the above in view, you will place yourself in friendly communication with Her Majesty's Consul-General, Mr. Niven Moore, from whom you will generally obtain the latest information from the interior and from

* "Doris," "Liffey," "Raccoon," "Intrepid" (on arrival from Naples), "Lapwing," "Greyhound."

the coast; and every attention should be paid to any requisitions you may receive from Mr. Moore for the above-named objects.

You will see, by my General Memorandum of the 2nd instant, that protection is to be afforded by the ships under your orders to Austrian Consuls, commerce, and subjects, and it is desirable therefore that you should call upon the Chevalier de Weckbecker, Austrian Commissioner and Consul-General at Beyrout, and inform him, in conversation, of the instructions you have received on this head.

It will be right, also, that you take an opportunity of visiting Achmet Pasha, the Governor-General of this Pashalic; and when calling at the outports the respective Governors should be visited, and the importance should be pointed out to them of checking with firmness and vigour any disposition to commit excesses on the part of the Moslems or others, for it seems to be established that, wherever the Governors show energy and decision, they are well able to prevent a rising among the people.

Inquiry should also be made of the authorities and the Consular Agents whether all needful steps are being taken for the amelioration of the condition of the Christian refugees from the interior.

With reference to my quitting the coast with the ships-of-the-line during the winter months, no pains should be spared to impress upon all parties that, in withdrawing a portion of the force under my orders, Her Majesty's Government will not cease to watch with anxiety the state of affairs in Syria, and to demand efficient protection for British subjects and interests.

You will take advantage of the vessels being together to visit, in force, Jaffa, Caiffa, Acre, Tyre, Sidon, Tripoli, Latakia, and Lanarca, leaving one vessel here during your absence, or sending the ships under the second officer in command, while you remain at Beyrout in the "Doris;" but by the 10th November, at the latest, you should take up your anchorage at St. George's Bay, with three vessels, and send the remaining three, under the orders of Captain Preedy, to the Gulf of Iskanderoon, where they will find a safe anchorage, either at Alexandretta or Ayas. If it should be found that the climate there proves pernicious to the health of the crews, Lanarca may then be resorted to.

The vessels in the Gulf of Iskanderoon are frequently to visit the ports to the northward of Beyrout, and those to the southward are to be visited by the vessels with you at such times as the appearance of the weather and the barometer may seem to make it prudent; but captains should be cautioned to be ready at all times to put to sea at the shortest notice, and the ships should frequently weigh, for exercise.

Any information you may obtain with regard to the political condition of the outports is to be freely communicated to Lord Dufferin, Her Majesty's Commissioner, and to the Consul-General.

The frequent visits of Her Majesty's ships to the different ports will, I am sanguine, prove adequate protection to Christians from violence, and to British interests, although it is probable that some of the Vice-Consuls, warned by recent events, will be anxious to have vessels constantly stationed with them, and will write to you to that effect. In complying with any such requisition, you will be guided by your own judgment, aided by the counsels of the Consul-General and such information as he may himself have received from the Consular Agents.

As much excitement continues to prevail in the interior amongst the fanatical Moslem population, leave must not be given to the crews; and you are not to permit any extended absence on the part of the officers from their ships.

The "Firefly" is employed surveying on the coast, and is not in any way to be diverted from her duties.

Given on board the "Marlborough," at Beyrout the 10th of October, 1860.

(Signed) W. F. MARTIN.

To Edmund Heathcote, Esq.,

Captain of Her Majesty's ship "Doris."

By command, &c.

(Signed) G. P. MARTIN, Secretary.

No. 235.

Mr. Hammond to the Secretary to the Admiralty.

Foreign Office, November 13, 1860.

Sir,

I HAVE laid before Lord John Russell your letter of the 8th instant, transmitting for his Lordship's information extracts of the orders given by Vice-Admiral Martin to the senior officer of Her Majesty's ships and vessels stationed on the coast of Syria; and I am to request you to state to the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty that Lord John Russell considers those orders to be entirely fit and proper in the present state of Syrian affairs.

I am, &c.

(Signed) E. HAMMOND.

No. 236.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received November 14.)

(No. 1,447.)

My Lord,

Paris, November 13, 1860.

ALTHOUGH your Lordship did not desire me to communicate to M. Thouvenel the contents of your despatch No. 1,099 of the 7th instant, stating the insuperable objections of Her Majesty's Government to a prolonged occupation of Syria by European troops, yet as your Lordship mentions in the despatch that you had informed the Marquis of Chateaurenard that the opinion of Her Majesty's Government on this point should be communicated to the French Government through me, I presume that it was your Lordship's intention that I should speak to M. Thouvenel on the subject, and I accordingly read to him this afternoon your Lordship's despatch.

M. Thouvenel observed—and he begged me to take care to convey his observation to your Lordship's knowledge—that he had never written to the Marquis of Chateaurenard such a despatch as it would appear had been communicated to you. He had neither stated that the General in command of the French troops in Syria had considered reinforcements of European troops to be necessary, still less had he hinted even at a prolongation of the period of their stay beyond six months. What he had done was this: he had desired M. de Chateaurenard to call your Lordship's attention to the accounts which had then just been received from Syria, and which wore a very serious aspect; Fuad Pasha having been unable or unwilling to prevent the escape of the Druse Chiefs, being uncertain whether the Arab tribes would take part with the Druses or not, and having under the circumstances requested General Beaufort to increase the number of French troops employed in the Mountain. He had added that it would be for Europe to consider whether reinforcements were necessary, and, if necessary, by whom they should be provided. As for France, not another Frenchman would be sent.

But with regard to a prolongation of the period of occupation, M. Thouvenel declared that this point had not even been touched upon in his despatch to M. Chateaurenard. He had formed no opinion, and would form no opinion upon the subject until he should be in possession of the report of the Syrian Commission. His hope was that the troops might come away within the term settled by the Convention of the 5th of September, and it was but a few days ago that he had written to the French Commissioner, M. Béclard, desiring him not to lose sight of the fact that the moment was approaching when by the terms of the Convention the European occupation must cease, and requesting him to lose no time in urging the Commission to enter upon the discussion of the future government of the Lebanon.

He was free to confess that in his opinion it would be a sorry termination to the intervention of Europe in Syria if the day after the departure

of the troops fresh massacres were to occur, and he was apprehensive that this would be the case unless before their departure some settled form of government should have been framed.

I am bound to add that the language which M. Thouvenel held this afternoon coincides with that which he has always held to me on this subject. He has never shown any desire either to send French reinforcements to Syria or to prolong the stay of those already there, so much so that I was exceedingly surprised when I read your Lordship's account of his Excellency's despatch on these matters, as about the time it must have been written he had told me, with reference to the sending of British reinforcements, that nothing indicated a want of them on the part of General Beaufort, and that he should like to wait for further reports from him before pronouncing any opinion upon the subject.

But whatever may have been the impression of M. Thouvenel a week or two ago, it appears that his last reports from Syria are so satisfactory that he is no longer under any apprehension of a prolonged resistance to Fuad Pasha.

Adverting to that paragraph of your Lordship's despatch which states "that Her Majesty's Government would prefer, as a choice of evils, to see the Government of Syria restored to authorities named by, or connected with the Porte, in the manner which the Mixed Commission shall consider most favourable to the future peace of Syria," M. Thouvenel said that the French Government could not be a party to any ransom which would deprive the Lebanon of so much of the right of self-government as had been granted to it by the arrangement of 1846. As he seemed to allude to the words "authorities named by the Porte," I observed that your Lordship's remarks applied to Syria in general, where, as far as I was aware, the Porte had never conceded any of its sovereign rights, and that the words which followed "authorities connected with the Porte" probably were intended to refer to such authorities as the Porte did not name, but acknowledged.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

No. 237.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received November 14.)

(No. 1,448.)

My Lord,

Paris, November 13, 1860.

WHEN M. Thouvenel mentioned to me, as is stated in my despatch No. 1,447 of this day's date, that the French Government were determined not to send reinforcements to Syria, I asked his Excellency whether he was aware that reinforcements had been sent, and that the French army of occupation now amounted to about 8,000 men. His Excellency replied that I had overstated the amount, though he admitted that it approached my statement; but he said that there were 1,500 sick, and that General Beaufort had not above 6,000 effective men.

I rejoined that I had not made the remark reproachfully, but that I wished to reconcile the statement which he had made with the accounts received from Syria that reinforcements, though small, were continually arriving.

M. Thouvenel said that the departure of some further troops which had been under orders for Syria had been countermanded.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

No. 238.

Lord J. Russell to Earl Cowley.

(No. 1,134.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, November 14, 1860.

WITH reference to your Excellency's despatch No. 1,447 of the 13th instant, I have to acquaint you that you rightly understood and correctly stated to M. Thouvenel the views of Her Majesty's Government as stated in my despatch No. 1,099 of the 7th instant, in regard to the nature of the Government which they would be glad to see established in Syria.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 239.

Sir H. Bulwer to Lord J. Russell.—(Received November 17.)

(No. 726.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, November 7, 1860.

HAVING addressed remonstrances to the Porte in conformity with those made by his Excellency Fuad Pasha against the state of affairs at Damascus, I have the satisfaction to announce that the Turkish Government has resolved to remove Mouhaver Pasha, the late Governor, and appoint Emin Pasha in his place.

I inclose to your Lordship herewith a sketch of Emin Pasha's antecedents and character, on the correctness of which I believe I can place reliance, and which may warrant some hope that under the new Governor's administration the condition of the Province of Damascus may be considerably ameliorated.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY L. BULWER.

Inclosure in No. 239.

Sketch of Emin Pasha's Antecedents and Character.

EMIN PASHA is the son of Mustafa Hassib Effendi, a Moolah, of some distinction, from whom he received an excellent education.

At 25 he entered the translating department at the Porte; in 1837 he accompanied Mahmoud II to Roumelia; and on the return of the Sultan to Constantinople was appointed Secretary of Embassy in London under Sami Pasha; thence he was transferred to Paris. In 1841 he again served in the translating department; and in 1844 and 1845 was charged with missions to Servia, and subsequently with the superintendence of the quarantine and passport offices. He was then appointed first interpreter at the Porte; served at Bucharest under Suleyman Pasha, the Turkish Commissioner in the Principalities; was sent on a mission to the Lebanon, and named President of the Council of Syrian affairs at Saida. On his return to Constantinople he was appointed Secretary for Foreign Affairs under Aali Pasha, and President of the Commission sitting at Constantinople on the affairs of the Holy Places. Shortly afterwards, his health having given way, he returned to Syria, on a special mission to Aleppo, to inquire into the conduct of Hamdi Pasha. At the expiration of this inquiry he retired from active service, but was lately induced to accept the Presidency of the Municipal Council in Pera.

Emin Pasha is remarkable for integrity and intellectual powers; he has, moreover, great administrative ability, and holds liberal opinions.

No. 240.

Lord Dufferin to Lord J. Russell.—(Received November 19.)

(No. 21.)

My Lord,

Beyrout, November 4, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Lordship's information, copy of nine further despatches which I have this day dispatched to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople.

I have, &c.

(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 240.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, October 26, 1860.

I REGRET extremely that indisposition should have prevented me from writing to your Excellency by the last mails. The same cause will compel me to defer until the next opportunity a general review I had intended to submit to your Excellency relative to the present aspect of affairs in this country.

In the meantime I have had the honour of addressing some despatches to your Excellency upon various subjects, which it was necessary to bring more immediately under your notice.

I have, &c.

(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 2 in No. 240.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, October 30, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Excellency's information, copy of a despatch which I have addressed to Mr. Wrench, Her Majesty's Acting Consul at Damascus, urging him to use every endeavour to put an end to the panic now existing among the Christians at that place.

In explanation of the last paragraph, I beg to state that the refugees at Beyrout are encouraging their fellow-citizens to join them here, on the plea that there is an ample supply of money, and nothing to do for it. The effect of such an invitation is very demoralizing. If the Committee were to make it known that, having organized a system of relief at Damascus, they would not be responsible for the support of those who chose to come to Beyrout, and were to carry such a regulation into effect, the report of the circumstances would quickly spread, and one of the least respectable motives for flight would be abolished.

I have, &c.

(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 3 in No. 240.

Lord Dufferin to Acting Consul Wrench.

Sir,

Beyrout, October 29, 1860.

I BEG to suggest that you should continue to use every exertion to put an end to the unreasonable panic which seems to prevail at Damascus among the Christian population, and that you should exert your influence to induce them to remain in their city.

Major Fraser has suggested to me that the Relief Committee should be invited to refuse relief to such refugees as persist in coming to Beyrout. To this excellent recommendation I have already attended.

I am, &c.

(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 4 in No. 240.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, November 1, 1860.

I NOW propose to give to your Excellency a slight sketch of the progress of events in this province during the last three weeks.

In my despatch of the 5th ultimo I had the honour of informing you that Fuad Pasha, in conjunction with General de Beaufort, having completed the military occupation of the Mountain, and having failed in his endeavour to intercept the column of fugitive Druses, had himself returned to Mokhtarrah, while he invited M. de Beaufort to retire within the precincts of the Lebanon Proper. With this injunction the French General very unwillingly complied, and I have reason to believe that for an instant he entertained the idea of making a sudden and independent movement on the Ledjah. Reflection, however, induced him to abandon this somewhat inconsiderate intention, and within a few days afterwards he made his appearance at Beyrout. I took advantage of a visit which he was good enough to pay me, to remonstrate strongly against the outrages committed by the Christians who accompanied his army, stating that Europe had interfered for the express purpose of hindering these barbarian tribes from cutting each other's throats; and that it might prove disadvantageous to his reputation if his arrival in the Lebanon were to become the signal for the renewal of the very atrocities he had been commissioned to prevent.

M. de Beaufort replied, that the reports of what had taken place were much exaggerated; that it was but natural the Christians should seize the earliest opportunity of revenge; and it was impossible for him to have prevented what occurred.

Upon this I enumerated upwards of twenty or thirty cases of most savage murder, when old men, children, and women had been the victims; and concluded by suggesting that if only steps had been taken to punish a single culprit, these crimes would never be repeated.

M. de Beaufort then announced to me that it was his intention to arrange his army in three moveable columns within a triangle, of which Beyrout would be the apex, and the eastern boundary of the Lebanon the base; that he would then visit all the Druse villages; and inasmuch as Fuad Pasha had called upon the inhabitants to remain within their houses, he should consider himself at liberty to treat as enemies such of the Druse nation as he should find roaming about the Mountain. To this I replied, that it was beyond my province to venture to criticize any plan he might have formed; that I was sure he would only act in accordance with the dictates of humanity; but that if I might permit myself an observation, it seemed to me rather inconsistent that, after allowing his Christian followers to maltreat and murder the Druses when they remained at home, he should declare it a *casus belli* when they fled at his approach. I permitted myself to add, in a very decided manner, that the expatriation of this people would be a measure of such barbarity as to be quite inadmissible.

In reference to the above conversation I would remark, that it is probable the French General, having been disappointed in finding that their passive attitude gave him no excuse for falling sword in hand upon the Druses, regarded with greater indifference than was natural the conduct of the Christians, in the expectation that it would afford a means either of frightening the Druses out of the Mountain altogether, or of exasperating them into resistance.

With a view to countervail so unjust a mode of dealing with them, I had taken an opportunity of suggesting to the American missionaries who

inhabit the Mixed districts, that they should recommend the Druses to remain quiet in their villages, and on no account to offer any opposition.

My conversation with M. de Beaufort, which had been conducted in the most amicable spirit, concluded by his alluding, with some bitterness, to the inefficiency of Fuad Pasha's arrangements for the capture of the fugitive Chiefs.

I cannot but admit that there is great cause for dissatisfaction in this respect. Nevertheless, I acquit Fuad Pasha of all connivance at their escape. I am convinced that he desired no better than to have laid his hand on a string of prisoners in the act of flight, whom he might have sent in chains to Beyrout without further ceremony. If his intentions were not accomplished, it is to be attributed to the stupidity or indolence of those he had appointed to intercept them.

So strongly have I felt the gravity of the error committed in this respect, that I took upon myself to represent to Fuad Pasha that, up to this moment, no punishment whatever had been inflicted on the authors of the bloody massacres at Hasbeya, Rasheya, and Deir-el-Kamar; that not a single Druse had been executed; and that before he could hope to compose the troubles of the Mountain, some signal acts of justice must overtake the individuals who had shed the blood of their fellow-creatures in such lamentable profusion.

This painful duty once accomplished, he might publish an amnesty, from which the more notorious culprits would of course be excepted, and then proceed to a general pacification. Such timely severity would exempt him from the reproaches to which he was now exposed, and deprive the French General of all pretext for disquieting the Druse districts by his inconsiderate raids.

His Excellency replied, that he was only waiting for the Druses to return to their villages, from which the proceedings of the French had driven them, and that then, in a single night, he would seize all those who had been concerned in the massacres.

While matters were proceeding in the above manner in the Mountain, accounts kept coming from Damascus of a very unsatisfactory character. We were told that the Christians were being threatened; that the Turkish troops were all in hospital; that the Druses of the Hauran were preparing to attack the city; that Moslems were chalking crosses on the doors of Christian houses; and that a second massacre was imminent.

Although I had an instinctive feeling that there must be something fictitious in all this, it was evident that Fuad Pasha's presence had become necessary at Damascus, and I sent a messenger to Mokhtarrah, recommending him to go. Before, however, he could receive my note, his Excellency had already started.

His first act after his arrival was to put in prison a certain Kerami, a Christian, whom he had left behind in a semi-official position. This man was completely unworthy of his Excellency's confidence, and had abused his trust in the most flagitious manner. He gave himself out as Fuad Pasha's Vicegerent; he frightened the Governor of the town into obedience; he extorted large sums of money from Christians and Mahometans; and practised in the vilest manner on the women who came to him as suppliants.

No incident could give your Excellency a better idea of the difficulties Fuad Pasha has to encounter from the dearth of trustworthy agents.

Having disposed of Kerami, Fuad Pasha then proceeded to lay hands on a fresh batch of notables, among whom was Abdallah Bey, one of the principal instigators of the late massacres, and a person enjoying the reputation of great sanctity among his co-religionists.

These individuals were sent to Beyrout, and subsequently to Cyprus, not on any particular charge, it being impossible to find any one to testify against them; but as persons whose presence at Damascus was incompatible with public tranquillity. Should any evidence be subsequently forthcoming, they will be brought back to Beyrout, and dealt with accordingly.

At the same time 230 lesser criminals were sent off to Constantinople.

Having administered this summary justice, his Excellency announced his intention of coming to Beyrout in order to take part in the deliberations

of the Commission, and he sent us an assurance that the late panic had been organized by the Christians, and that the chalking of the doors was a device of their own by which they hoped to furnish themselves with the pretext of insecurity for removing to Beyrout. Though this idea was ridiculed by my colleagues, I am inclined to think there may be some foundation for it.

In the meantime General de Beaufort had put into execution the plan he had been good enough to communicate to me. His operations, however, resulted in a movement of no great importance on certain villages in the neighbourhood of Ain Anub and Kefereiya, where a good many houses were pillaged, three Druses killed by the French soldiers, and other irregularities committed, of which it might seem captious to complain.

I regret, however, to be obliged to add that about this time I received a private letter from General Kmety, who commanded the Turkish army in the Lebanon, complaining of the manner in which himself and his troops were treated by the French officers and soldiers, and announcing his intention to resign. I was too ill at the time to write a reply; but I sent a message to the General recommending him not to show too great a susceptibility, and earnestly requesting him to remain at his post.

As far as I have been able to learn, this officer's complaints appear well founded. He himself does not seem to have been treated with due consideration, and his soldiers have been pelted with stones while on duty, and otherwise maltreated by the French. Such an occurrence is the more to be regretted as General Kmety is a faithful, intelligent, and energetic servant of the Porte.

I have but one more circumstance of any very great importance to signalize to your Excellency. I regret to say that the exodus from Damascus still goes on. Yesterday upwards of 1,000 refugees from that city arrived in Beyrout. If the stream of emigration continues unchecked none but the scanty dregs of the Christian population will remain. One of the great causes of their flight is the inefficient manner in which the Government provides them with the necessaries of life. Their daily allowance is suffered to fall into arrear, the rations with which they are furnished are bad and unwholesome, and nothing is done to convince them of the beneficent intentions of the authorities. This neglect and mismanagement on the part of the Government is, no doubt, involuntary, and to be attributed to the utter exhaustion of their finances.

A few days ago a French General of Brigade, M. Duerotre, arrived in Beyrout. In a conversation I had with him he stated that in his opinion there were only two things to be done for Syria, each being an extreme measure, and the one the exact opposite of the other, viz., either to hand over the entire province, Lebanon and all, to the Turks, or else to make Abd-el-Kader ruler of the Arab populations, and institute an independent principality for the Christians. I am scarcely inclined to attach any very great significance to this expression of opinion.

I trust that the foregoing retrospect will, with the despatches on separate subjects I have already forwarded, enable your Excellency to form a pretty accurate notion of what has been going on.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYF

Inclosure 5 in No. 240.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, October 31, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Excellency copy of the Protocol of the fifth sitting of the Commission.

It was on this occasion that his Excellency Fuad Pasha for the first time made his appearance among us, and entered upon the discharge of his functions as *ex officio* President of our body. Until now the proceedings

of the Commission have been comparatively unimportant, as we were compelled to confine ourselves to the occupation of assailing Abro Efendi, his Excellency's delegate, with a storm of questions, requisitions, and proposals, which that gentleman always declared himself incompetent to entertain. Now, however, that we are brought face to face with the Turkish Representative there is a better prospect of our meetings becoming productive of some practical result. Nothing could have been more skilful, conciliatory, or dignified than the manner in which Fuad Pasha proceeded to establish his official relations with us, and it was rather amusing to observe the change of tone in our discussions which the courtesy of his own manners insensibly imposed. He is now, as it were, a man fighting with his face to the sun, and from a lower level; but did the justice of his cause but equalize the chances of his position it is evident he would be more than a match for his present opponents. His powers of conciliation are very great, and I have remarked that the persons most indisposed towards him, when admitted to his intimacy, have always in some degree succumbed to the plausibility of his representations and the charm of his manners.

I need not particularly describe the details of our Conference; the Protocol itself will afford your Excellency a sufficiently accurate idea of the general character of the proceedings. I may, however, permit myself to remark that in consequence of the Secretary of the Commission being a Frenchman, a more favourable and expanded representation is insensibly given to the part played by his chief than the facts of the case would strictly warrant. I would not have alluded to this circumstance had it not roused the indignation of one of my colleagues, who seems inclined to attempt to curtail the innocent partiality of our reporter.

As your Excellency will perceive the Commission was mainly occupied in considering the representations I thought it my duty to make regarding the unsatisfactory procedure adopted by the Extraordinary Tribunal of Beyrout.

Having convinced myself that the only effective way of conducting a *bona fide* investigation into the circumstances out of which the late disturbances arose would be by acquiring for the Delegates of the Commission, appointed to watch the trial of those concerned in them, the privilege of directing the inquiry into whatever channel seemed most likely to lead to the discovery of the truth, I ventured to represent to Fuad Pasha, in as conciliatory a manner as I could command, the expediency of his granting to our representatives permission to suggest, in writing, to the President of the tribunal, such questions as from time to time it might appear desirable to them should be addressed either to the prisoner or to the witnesses.

Perceiving, however, that my colleagues did not seem inclined to support such a proposition, and being aware that under such circumstances his Excellency would never accede to it, I contented myself with stating my opinion, without pressing it further upon their attention.

Nevertheless, I may be permitted to express to your Excellency my conviction that some such means as the above would offer the only facilities we are likely to obtain, for fulfilling the first of the duties we are instructed to discharge, namely, the discovery of the causes of the late events.

At present, although a pretty accurate conjecture may be formed as to the nature of many of the influences which were at work, it is only by cross-examination of witnesses, the comparison of evidence, the confronting of the Druse Chiefs with the Turkish officials, and both with their Christian accusers, that the absolute truth can be evolved.

Now, even if they had the wish, no Turkish tribunal possesses either the experience or the skill necessary to conduct so complicated an investigation. But we have every reason to believe that the real object which the Beyrout Tribunal has at heart is the concealment of the truth, and the destruction, with as much despatch as possible, of those whose mutual recrimination would bring to the knowledge of Europe facts with which it is their interest to keep her unacquainted. It becomes, therefore, a matter of great importance that we should have the power of preventing those in

the purity of whose intentions we can have so little confidence from stifling inquiry and cooking evidence.

It was suggested during the course of the discussion, that the *procès-verbal* of each day's proceedings would afford the Commission an opportunity of acquiring, through the Representative of the Porte, the very satisfaction I desired our delegates should be empowered to demand; but to this observation I replied, that up to the present moment, as the report of my delegate proved, the *procès-verbal* was an untrustworthy and garbled representation of what occurred, and that notwithstanding that his Excellency had been good enough to undertake that the procedure of the Court should be improved, it was impossible, no matter what precautions were taken, to prevent the reports submitted to our examination, from conveying but a meagre and inadequate notion to our mind of the real nature of its proceedings.

Moreover, your Excellency will immediately perceive that even if the texture of the *procès-verbal*, was sufficiently close to enable us to seize the important clue which was to conduct us to the truth, it would be impossible to convey beforehand to the Tribunal, instructions sufficiently stringent to compel them to make a *bona fide* use of it, more especially when Fuad Pasha himself was the only medium through which they could be communicated with. At best it would only be the examination-in-chief that could be thus dictated; for all purposes of cross-examination—by which alone evidence can be sifted—such a method would of course be completely inappropriate.

So convinced am I of the necessity for the Commission to acquire the right of directing the investigation, that at a convenient opportunity I shall again invite my colleagues to consider whether we cannot in some way or another obtain permission to handle the witnesses ourselves.

This question being then disposed of, a proposition was made by the Representative of Prussia that the accused should be allowed to communicate with some person who might take charge of his papers and collect his witnesses. Austria and myself strongly supported some such arrangement. The Representative of France declared it to be undesirable, Russia followed in his wake, and Fuad Pasha naturally took advantage of this difference of opinion to prevent the introduction of such an innovation, declaring that were he allowed to employ an agent of this kind, Said Bey's wealth would enable him to suborn any number of witnesses.

He concluded, however, by repeating the assurances he had already made to me individually two days before, on the occasion of my former remonstrance, that he would endeavour to apply every remedy that was compatible with the custom of Turkish Courts, to put a stop to the irregularities of which we complained. I am happy to be able to add that these promises have been accomplished, and that the trial of Said Bey Jumblat is now proceeding in a more satisfactory manner. It is probable, indeed, that the steps we have taken will result in the adoption of a mode of procedure which, though still lamentably defective, will at all events be as equitable as has ever been known in a Turkist Court of Justice.

One of the reasons for which I was so anxious that Said Bey should have some person into whose hands he might commit his papers, was that I have been informed he possesses a document to which he attaches such great importance that he is unwilling to hand it over to the Court for fear they should destroy it.

I hardly know how much credit may be attached to this report, but I am of opinion that, if such a document exists, the prisoner's misgivings are not unreasonable.

I have instructed Mr. Noel Moore to insist on all documents handed into Court being communicated to the Delegates of the Commission.

Before concluding our sitting we succeeded in extracting from Fuad Pasha one very important concession, namely, that previously to sentence being passed on any of the prisoners, we should have an opportunity of communicating to his Excellency our opinion of the evidence and on the reports with which we shall be furnished.

I have but one further incident to signalise to your Excellency.

During the course of the discussion on M. Rehfuës' proposal the

Austrian Representative, M. Weckbecker, stated that, inasmuch as we were merely instructed to "provoquer la punition des coupables," he did not consider himself bound to advocate the acquittal of the innocent; should a person not guilty be condemned the responsibility of such injustice rested solely with the Turkish Tribunal. This idea I ventured most earnestly to combat, arguing that although the Commission collectively may be considered to discharge the duty of prosecutors on behalf of Europe and Christianity, yet, that from the moment our Delegates entered Court, the discovery of truth and the attainment of the ends of justice was the sole object that they ought to propose to themselves, and that the acquittal of the innocent was as essentially the logical consequence of this principle as the condemnation of the guilty.

In conclusion, I trust your Excellency will not imagine that I have at all wished to insist that the formalities and complications known to European law should be practised on the present occasion.

I am well aware that in such a crisis it is more humane to administer a rough and speedy justice than to allow those manifestly deserving of punishment to escape on any quibble or mere legal pretext. But of any excess in this direction I see no danger. Only three days ago Fuad Pasha assured me that he would hang any man whom he could get two European Consuls to declare guilty, not on any proof, but on their moral convictions; and that he would make a present to the Commission of any head we chose to ask for. Yet his Excellency is undoubtedly a very humane man.

It cost him a great struggle, I have been told, to order Ahmet Pasha for execution; and kindness and benevolence are the sentiments most natural to his amiable nature. When, however, one sees a person ready, for political considerations, to deal out capital punishment with such unprincipled facility, one is naturally anxious to take care that Justice while she grasps the sword with one hand should not let her scales slip from the other.

I think it right to add that I have quite satisfied my colleagues that it is by a sense of equity alone that my conduct on this occasion has been regulated, that the fact of Said Bey Jumblat's being the case in question was an accidental circumstance foreign to my thoughts, and that in all that I do I have only at heart the cause of humanity and justice.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 6 in No. 240.

Protocol of the Fifth Meeting of the Syrian Commission, held at Beyrout, October 23, 1860.

CEJOURD'HUI, Mardi, vingt-trois Octobre, mil huit cent soixante, à deux heures de l'après-midi, les Membres de la Commission Internationale, assistés d'Abro Efendi, Délégué Ottoman, se sont réunis à Beyrout sous la présidence de M. de Weckbecker, Commissaire d'Autriche.

Le procès-verbal de la séance précédente est lu et adopté.

Le Commissaire Prussien interpelle Abro Efendi sur la question de savoir pourquoi l'on exige des habitants de certaines localités des quittances définitives en échange des sommes qui leur sont allouées par les Comités d'Evaluation.

Abro Efendi répond que les sommes ainsi allouées ne sont pas même des à-comptes sur le montant des indemnités, mais seulement des secours. Quant aux quittances exigées des habitants, il nie que ce soient des quittances définitives, et assure que ce sont de simples récépissés.

Une discussion s'engage à ce propos et les divers Membres de la Commission y prennent part. Lord Dufferin est d'avis que tous les doutes cesseraient si les Délégués de la Commission étaient adjoints aux Comités, ainsi que cela avait été précédemment décidé. On se demande qui rétribuera les Délégués, ou du moins qui leur remboursera leurs frais d'entretien et de déplacement. Abro Efendi déclare qu'ils recevront du

Gouvernement la même rétribution que leurs collègues. Cet engagement n'est pas accepté par la Commission.

Abro Efendi fait savoir que les Comités sont actuellement au nombre de huit. Un seul est composé de cinq membres; les autres n'en comptent que quatre; total, trente-trois. Il y a dans chaque Comité un Musulman, un Chrétien, un menuisier, et un maître maçon montagnard.

Partis de Beyrout, ces Comités parcourent, en corps, les villages de la circonscription qui leur est assignée. Leurs travaux seront terminés dans une vingtaine de jours.

M. de Weckbecker pense que si les allocations actuelles ne sont délivrées qu'à titre de secours, la Commission ne pourrait envoyer ses Délégués que lorsqu'on s'occupera des évaluations définitives.

M. de Rehues maintient son assertion relativement aux quittances exigées des habitants, et que ceux-ci souscrivent par ignorance de l'avenir et pour ne pas être frustrés d'une indemnité même insuffisante.

Abro Efendi demande les noms de ceux qui ont souscrit des pareilles quittances; mais le Commissaire Prussien ne croit pas pour le moment devoir les faire connaître.

La question de l'adjonction des Délégués est encore réservée par la Commission jusqu'à plus ample information.

Abro Efendi donne lecture d'une lettre qu'il a reçu de Fuad Pacha en réponse aux allégations contenues dans un rapport du Consul de France à Damas, dont plusieurs passages ont été communiqués à la Commission par M. Bécлар. Il demande que la lettre de Fuad Pacha soit annexée au présent procès-verbal.

Le Commissaire Français ne s'y oppose pas, mais il conteste les rectifications de Fuad Pacha; il croit, au contraire, que toutes les informations de M. Outrey ont été puisées à bonne source et ne sont pas de nature à être démenties.

M. de Rehues fait remarquer à la Commission que les personnes condamnées en dernier lieu à Damas, celles que Abdallah el Halebi et autres, sont arrivées à Beyrout en pompeux équipage, avec une suite nombreuse et dans des conditions de confort qui contrastent avec le mode habituel de transport des condamnés.

Abro Efendi répond que les personnes en question ont été éloignées de Damas dans le but principal de calmer les inquiétudes des Chrétiens. Leur culpabilité n'a pu être établie par aucune preuve positive, et la seule charge qui pèse sur eux est de n'avoir pas empêché les désordres de Damas.

MM. Novikow et de Rehues s'étonnent que la peine de la détention perpétuelle ou même à terme ait été ainsi prononcée, comme mesure administrative, contre des individus réputés innocents.

M. de Weckbecker trouve que la Commission a surtout à se plaindre de n'avoir reçu aucune communication relativement aux récentes condamnations. Jusqu'à ce que les dossiers aient été soumis à la Commission, il conviendrait que les condamnés fussent retenus à Beyrout.

M. Bécлар annonce qu'il se propose d'appeler l'attention du Commissaire Extraordinaire de la Porte, dès que ce dernier sera de retour à Beyrout, sur les poursuites à exercer contre les auteurs des massacres à Saïda. Ceux-ci jusqu'à présent sont restés impunis. Abro Efendi explique cette impunité par le fait que Fuad Pacha n'a pu faire à Saïda qu'un séjour de courte durée; mais il est convaincu qu'à Saïda comme ailleurs les coupables recevront le châtiment qu'ils ont mérité.

Le Commissaire Prussien croit devoir présenter de nouvelles observations sur la réponse faite par Fuad Pacha au memorandum de la Commission en ce qui concerne la participation qu'elle peut prendre à l'enquête. La distinction établie entre l'enquête générale et l'enquête judiciaire ne saurait être admise par la Commission qu'à la condition de maintenir rigoureusement pour celle-ci le droit qui lui appartient de rechercher, aux termes des instructions identiques, la part de responsabilité des chefs de l'insurrection et des agents de l'administration. Or, ce droit elle ne peut l'exercer sans intervenir dans le procès.

Abro Efendi fait observer que la Commission recevra communication

des dossiers, et qu'après les avoir examinés elle pourra formuler son opinion.

Le Commissaire Russe n'admet pas qu'un jugement puisse être rendu ni exécuté sans que la Commission en ait eu connaissance.

Abro Efendi réserve sur ce point l'opinion de Fuad Pacha, qui doit arriver le jour même à Beyrouth. Il dit que lorsque tous les procès seront suffisamment instruits on rendra des jugements en masse, mais il ne croit pas que les Commissaires aient le droit s'ériger en juges.

M. de Rehfuès déclare protester contre tous les jugements qui seraient rendus ou exécutés avant que tous les dossiers aient été préalablement communiqués à la Commission.

Pour couvrir sa responsabilité il demande que sa protestation soit insérée au procès-verbal.

M. de Weckbecker rappelle des précédentes observations comme venant à l'appui de la protestation de M. de Rehfuès. L'instruction préliminaire, a-t-il toujours dit, appartient aux tribunaux; mais la Commission doit être présente et peut intervenir lorsque l'accusé comparait devant ses juges. Telle est, à son point de vue, la mesure dans laquelle la Commission a le droit de concourir à l'enquête.

Un long débat s'engage à ce propos entre les Commissaires d'une part, qui veulent que leur intervention soit réelle et efficace, et le Délégué Ottoman d'autre part, qui soutient que cette intervention tend à priver les juges de leur indépendance.

La forme dans laquelle les accusés sont interrogés est soumise ensuite à diverses critiques ainsi que le peu de garanties dont la défense est entourée. Abro Efendi discute ces critiques et fait observer qu'on ne peut exiger d'un tribunal Turc l'observation de toutes les formes usitées en Europe.

Tous les membres de la Commission appuient successivement la protestation de M. de Rehfuès.

M. Béclard y ajoute cependant cette réserve que, dans sa pensée la dite protestation ne doit pas avoir pour effet tempérer en quoi que ce soit la sévérité du tribunal.

M. de Rehfuès déclare être d'accord sur ce point avec le Commissaire Français.

Le Président croit pouvoir formuler ainsi l'opinion de tous ses collègues :—

« La Commission prétend exercer une action collective quant à la recherche des causes et de l'origine des événements, ainsi que la culpabilité des chefs de l'insurrection et des agents de l'autorité. »

Le Commissaire Français fait un nouvel appel à la sévérité dans la répression.

Il est d'avis qu'on doit frapper de grands coups et éviter de se perdre dans les détails de la procédure.

La séance est levée à quatre heures un quart.

(Suivent les signatures.)

Annexe.

Fuad Pacha to Abro Efendi.

Monsieur,

Damas, le 13 Octobre, 1860.

AYANT vu dans une de vos lettres, par lesquelles vous m'avez rendu compte des séances de la Commission, que M. Béclard, Commissaire de Sa Majesté l'Empereur des Français, avait donné lecture d'une lettre de M. Outrey, Consul de France à Damas, à son Excellence M. Thouvenel, sur la situation de la ville, j'ai dû demander à M. Outrey certaines explications sur des faits qu'il avait avancés et qui me parurent d'une très grande importance, et il s'est empressé de faire des rectifications sur ce que je lui ai dit d'après le résumé que vous m'avez fait.

1. Comme appréciations générales, il avait parlé de certaines émotions et de frayeur qui s'étaient produites dernièrement dans la ville;

il n'a pas eu l'intention de dire que la ville courait un danger et qu'on était à la veille d'un second massacre.

2. En parlant des notables du pays qui sont détenus, il avait dit seulement qu'ils paraissaient avoir des relations dans la ville et qu'il n'a jamais voulu avancer qu'ils étaient en correspondance avec les bandes des Druses armées dans le but de les attirer sur Damas et faire massacrer les Chrétiens.

3. En parlant de Karâmi Efendi il avait voulu signaler la conduite de cet employé, qui compromettait le Tribunal Extraordinaire; mais il n'avait pas voulu former une accusation contre ce Tribunal comme concessionnaire.

Pour le premier point, comme il s'agit d'une appréciation générale, je n'ai qu'à exprimer aussi mes impressions et ce que j'ai vu à mon arrivée ici. On avait répandu le bruit d'un prétendu rassemblement des Druses, dans le but de marcher sur Damas. Ce bruit, et quelques signes de croix qu'on avait faits sur les portes des maisons occupées par les Chrétiens, ont contribué à amener une certaine inquiétude dans la ville parmi les Chrétiens. Les notables Chrétiens n'hésitent pas à soupçonner aussi les leurs d'être les auteurs de cette alarme donnée à leurs coreligionnaires.

Les autorités militaires se trouvaient entre deux alternatives: ou de ne rien faire pour ne pas accréditer ce bruit et d'être alors taxées d'inaction et d'insouciance, ou de montrer plus d'activité et de vigilance pour faire disparaître cette frayeur et être citées comme ayant elle-mêmes avoué l'existence d'un tel danger. Elle a préféré la première alternative, et on exprime pour sa conduite une très haute satisfaction, mais on l'appelle comme un témoignage sur la cause de cette alarme: on ne peut pas nier l'existence de cette frayeur, mais il n'y avait aucun danger pour la ville. La population Musulmane vit toujours sous l'impression de l'erreur, et je puis même dire, sans lui faire grâce, qu'elle ressent aujourd'hui les remords de ce qu'elle a fait.

Pour le second point, après les explications données par M. Outrey j'ai une seule chose à dire: c'est que j'avais confié la garde de ces détenus à la même autorité militaire pour laquelle on montre une si haute opinion. J'ai pris des informations, et je suis sûr que sauf, peut-être, quelques petites fautes commises par les soldats qui les gardaient, ces gens, qui sont aujourd'hui plus sévèrement gardés, n'avaient aucune relation ni avec la ville ni avec le dehors.

Quant au troisième point la conduite de Karâmi Efendi avait failli compromettre non seulement le Tribunal Extraordinaire, mais aussi celui dont il se disait le représentant. Vous connaissez Karâmi, qui est le fils du vieux Pédros Karâmi, secrétaire de l'Emir Beshîr; il était dans le bureau des traducteurs et quelques mois avant les événements de la Syrie il avait obtenu un congé pour aller vivre quelque temps à Saida, sa ville natale. A mon arrivée à Beyrouth je l'ai pris auprès de moi comme Secrétaire Interprète pour l'Arabe.

A Damas je l'avais mis dans la Commission chargée de distribuer des secours aux Chrétiens; mais, voyant que sa conduite blessait les Chrétiens qui étaient en rapports avec lui, je l'avais fait remplacer par Franco Efendi. Laisse à Damas sur sa demande pour cause de maladie, il s'est posé comme mon Délégué auprès des autorités et même auprès des Consuls. Sa conduite m'ayant été signalée par les autorités, et je la croyais bien loin de l'état où je l'ai trouvée, je lui avais donné l'ordre de retourner à Beyrouth, et je suis arrivée ici avant son départ.

Dénoncée comme concussionnaire je l'ai fait arrêter immédiatement, et j'ai trouvé chez lui l'argent et les quelques objets qui pèsent à sa charge. Comme il se montrait aux yeux du public plus que le Président du Tribunal Extraordinaire c'est cette conduite incompréhensible qui avait failli compromettre ce Tribunal, dont tous les membres sont des hommes d'une honnêteté et d'une probité bien connues.

Je suis entré dans tous ces détails pour faire disparaître des soupçons qui pouvaient planer sur les hommes auxquels j'avais donné ma confiance; c'est pour cette raison que je m'estime très heureux d'avoir fait cette découverte, qui me donne l'occasion de montrer que la justice que je suis

appelé à exercer peut atteindre les hommes qui se trouvent attachés même à ma mission.

Une de vos lettres me parle des Chrétiens du Hauran, sur la situation desquels la Commission a bien voulu appeler mon attention. J'ai reçu aussi une pétition de leur part et une délégation est venue me voir aujourd'hui.

Impossible de donner une garantie à Ismail-el-Atrash, qui s'est conduit d'une manière atroce lors des événements de Hasbeya et de Rasbeya. J'ai dû chercher un autre moyen pour assurer l'état des Chrétiens dans le cas où nos colonnes attaqueraient les Chefs Druses des Hauran, auxquels ceux du Liban se sont joints aujourd'hui. La famille de Amer pour laquelle les Chrétiens ont donné de très bons témoignages pouvant nous servir dans ce but, j'ai pris des dispositions pour les employer afin de créer un refuge chez eux pour les Chrétiens du Hauran, qui sont très peu nombreux d'après mes informations.

Halim Pacha est parti aujourd'hui pour Sasa, pour former les colonnes de poursuite à organiser. J'ai pu rassembler dans ce but une masse de Cavalerie Irrégulière d'environ 3,000 hommes.

Ce Général sera de retour Jeudi, et en le laissant ici j'espère partir le soir même pour être Vendredi ou Samedi à Beyrouth.

Agréé, &c.
(Signé) FUAD.

Inclosure 7 in No. 240.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrouth, November 2, 1860.

IN acknowledging the receipt of your Excellency's despatch of the October, I need not say how grateful I am for the indulgent terms in which you have been pleased to convey to me your approval of my conduct. To be made aware that I have as yet done nothing to forfeit your Excellency's confidence, is the greatest encouragement I could desire in the accomplishment of the difficult and ungrateful task with which I charged; and I only trust that I may continue to act in such a way as not to forfeit your good opinion. I shall use the most scrupulous care to conform my conduct in every particular to your Excellency's instructions; and I embrace this duty with the greater alacrity as it is impossible not to feel the force of the observations they embody.

I would desire more especially to express my thanks to your Excellency for the considerate manner in which you have warned me against allowing local considerations to assume proportions calculated to dwarf those of more general importance. Against this danger I am aware it is necessary to keep up a constant struggle. In regard, however, to the particular subject to which your Excellency refers, I am in hopes that a want of perspicuity in my expressions has caused you to infer that I entertain an opinion relative to the military occupation of this country different from that I was anxious to convey.

I have no hesitation in saying that the introduction of any foreign troops into Syria must be a circumstance fraught with many inconveniences. As to the presence of a French army, it will soon become an unmitigated evil, only to be considered supportable on the grounds of a major necessity. When, therefore, I ventured to suggest to your Excellency that perhaps it might be necessary even to leave in this country for some time longer than the period named in the Convention, a European force, I never contemplated anything but an inconsiderable body of 2,000 or 3,000 men, composed of contingents from various States of Europe. From an expression in your Excellency's despatch, I am in hopes that such an arrangement as this would not be at variance with what you are yourself disposed to consider as admirable. Could such a force be conveyed into Syria, I am of opinion that the French army might be dismissed in a very few months without danger to the tranquillity of the province. Nevertheless I am still strongly of opinion that it would be advisable, before

the present scale of the military occupation is diminished, that a joint expedition of English, French, and Turkish troops should be conducted into the Hauran. It even might be as well, though of this I am less certain, that they should show themselves at Damascus.

I am well aware that, in advocating these arrangements, I may still be unconsciously keeping too fixed a regard on this province. At the same time, I would ask your Excellency to remember that a person expressly charged, as I have been, with the duty of devising a guarantee for the future, is perhaps nervously alive to the risk the Christian inhabitants of Syria would run, were they at once denuded of that security at present assured to them by the presence of Fuad Pasha, by a French army, and by the vigilance of Christendom.

Though few people in this country would share my opinion, I am inclined to consider that even when these safeguards are withdrawn they will be safe; but so great is their natural timidity, so completely has their confidence been overthrown, so powerful are the influences at work to maintain the state of panic, that it will be impossible to reassure them without leaving in the country some material proof that they are still the object of European solicitude. Such a force as I have described would produce this effect, while at the same time it might prove not an undesirable support to Turkish authority.

If, however, other considerations render this arrangement impossible, if after we have patched up the Lebanon matters are to be allowed to return to their former state, and the province is to be handed back to the usual run of Turkish Governors, if on the first emergency in another part of the Empire the Turkish troops are to be again withdrawn, and the Christians are to be left face to face with their exasperated fellow-citizens, then it is clear there remains but one kind of precaution to be taken,—Fuad Pasha must be invited to multiply his executions sevenfold. Such extremity of terror must be struck into the minds of the Moslems as shall render this epoch a never to be forgotten era in their history, and Damascus must be visited with a severity unpractised since the middle ages.

At the same time I feel my misgivings may be exaggerated, and it is a great satisfaction to me to think that I can call upon your Excellency's cooler judgment to modify impressions which a sense of my responsibility may have imbued with too vivid a colouring; for it must always be remembered that if in three, five, ten years hence the horrors of this summer are repeated it is upon us that the reproaches of Europe will fall. A member of the Commission, therefore, may be excused if he discovers an anxiety to render the future tranquillity of the country a matter not merely of probability, but of certainty; even at the expense of disadvantages which any one, taking a more extensive survey of the question, would be disposed to consider of greater importance.

Above all things I would wish your Excellency to understand that, up to this moment I have maintained the strictest reserve as to the opinions which have gradually been maturing in my mind. Hitherto my sole occupation has been to acquaint myself with the circumstances of the country, to acquire an insight into the views and intentions of my colleagues, and to urge upon Fuad Pasha such measures as seemed most likely to mitigate the pressing distresses of the people. I am, therefore, in a position to carry out any line of policy which my accounts of the state of the country may have led your Excellency to consider advisable; and I need not say how relieved I have been to receive the ample and clear exposition of your views with which you have favoured me.

I am now prepared, however, to submit to your Excellency's consideration a plan for the settlement of the Province, which seems to me likely to offer a fair chance of solving some of the difficulties of the situation. I should prefer, however, to make its exposition the subject of a separate despatch.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 8 in No. 240.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, November 3, 1860.

I PURPOSE in this despatch to submit to your Excellency's consideration a scheme for the settlement of this Province, which appears to me to afford a fair chance of success.

In attempting to resolve the difficulties of the Syrian question I am aware that I undertake a task of great difficulty; that the situation of affairs is sufficiently complicated to baffle the most subtle ingenuity, and that it will be impossible to reconcile all the conflicting interests at stake. If, therefore, the plan which I propose should seem liable to many just objections, I would ask your Excellency to remember that at the best we have before us but a choice of evils.

I will begin by stating that after due inquiry and observation I have come to the conclusion that, notwithstanding that Syria is inhabited by ten distinct and uncivilized races, and that these races are again split up into seventeen fanatical sects, the government of the country under certain conditions would be a matter of little difficulty. Submission to superior authority is the natural instinct of all these people. Many of the tribes, indeed, are lawless and unruly, but the Druses alone possess anything approaching to a spirit of independence. The Maronites are arrogant to the weak, but as servile as the rest of their countrymen to those they fear; while the bulk of the peasantry is industrious, patient, and submissive. The only thing necessary, therefore, to secure public tranquillity is, that a Government should be constituted of sufficient strength to make itself respected. If it is destitute of this essential quality, the elements of discord in existence are numerous enough to maintain a state of endless confusion. Consequently, in considering any arrangement for the future it will be necessary to ascertain the causes which have hitherto enfeebled or demoralized the energies of the local administration.

It is not, however, necessary that I should weary your Excellency with an enumeration of all those symptoms of infirmity (inseparable from Mahometan institutions) which are equally common to every portion of the Empire. I will content myself with calling your attention to such as may be considered peculiarly incident to the government of this Province.

In the first place, then, I would remark that, for years past, Syria has been looked upon by the Porte as an outlying Pashalic, from which, in addition to the revenues to be obtained through the legitimate process of taxation, a considerable profit might be extracted by farming the post of Governor to such persons as could be induced to bid the highest price for it. In order to reimburse himself for his outlay, each newly-appointed Mushir was compelled to inaugurate his arrival in the country by visiting its inhabitants with the most intolerable exaction.

The process of squeezing he himself had undergone at Constantinople was applied to the province as soon as he reached Damascus. As it was for the advantage of the corrupt officials at the seat of government that these operations should be repeated as frequently as possible, the instrument of their rapacity stood in constant dread of receiving his recall.

In order to secure the indulgence of his protectors, it became necessary to satisfy their impatience with repeated bribes. Even so the duration of his term of office rarely exceeded two years, and it was only by the most unscrupulous activity in the work of spoliation that he was enabled to obtain a profit on the capital he had sunk in the purchase of the appointment.

This system naturally resulted in the province becoming cursed with a succession of incapable Pro-Consuls, chosen without any regard to their qualifications, ruthless in their oppressions, corrupt administrators of justice, and utterly indifferent to the interests of the people.

In order to show that even the present crisis has not been sufficient to startle the Porte into a change of system, I may mention that the person they sent to succeed the late Ahmet Pasha at Damascus is so utterly incompetent that it has been found necessary to supersede him,

and that Shukri Pasha, the new Reis or Commandant of the garrison, is described in a despatch of the Earl of Clarendon to Lord S. de Redcliffe as a man accused of "gross habitual drunkenness and debauchery," and "a total neglect of his duties."

Another cause of weakness to which the Government of this province is peculiarly subject arises from its strategical isolation. In consequence of the poverty of the Empire, it is impossible to furnish its various Pashalics with an adequate supply of troops. Consequently, whenever an emergency arises in one part of the Sultan's dominions, other portions are denuded of their garrisons in order to meet it. The crisis passed, the contingents return to their former stations. But Syria being so remote, the vacuum remains unsupplied for a longer period than in any other province. It was during one of these intervals in the military occupation of the country that the late disturbance occurred.

A third fatal impediment to unembarrassed action on the part of even the least ill-intentioned Governor may be attributed to the fact that all the Turkish officials are totally ignorant of the language, habits, and mode of thought of those they are sent to rule. Their position in Syria is, in fact, analogous to our own in India. Each fresh Pasha is accompanied by a batch of dependents equally new to the country. He and they are obliged to put themselves in the hands of intriguing natives.

For the reasons I have already stated his sojourn in the country does not last long enough to emancipate him from the trammels in which his ignorance confines him, and even if undisgraced by malversation his administration is disfigured by blunders and mismanagement.

Were it necessary to pursue this train of reasoning, I might point to other circumstances which may be considered to place this province in a different category from the remaining constituent portions of the Empire: but I think I have said enough to lead your Excellency to divine in what direction the remedy for its present misgovernment may be found to lie.

In the first place the charge of ruling the Syrian population ought to be confided to a man whose position should be rendered independent of the baneful influences dominant at Constantinople. He should be relieved from the obligation of paying black-mail to those in power at home. He should feel himself sufficiently secure in his Government to be able to defy the intrigues of his colleagues at the capital, and the exacting tutelage of European Consuls in his Pashalic. His appointments, secured on the revenues of the province, should be on a scale sufficiently liberal to obviate the temptations to which a needy official is exposed. His enjoyment of power should be secured to him for a term of years long enough to enable him to acquaint himself with the requirements of the country, and to inspire him with an interest in the welfare of the people. Above all things the selection of the individual should be made by the Porte in conjunction with the Great Powers, in order to secure the appointment of a person of talent and integrity.

At the same time that the future Administrator of the province is invested with this character of partial independence, the organization of its garrison ought to be placed on a footing somewhat different from that of the rest of the Imperial army. Although a very efficient local police might be created out of the native element, the submission of the province must always depend on the presence of Turkish Regulars. It would be, therefore, necessary to secure the constant presence of a certain number of these troops; but as the resources of the country if properly developed would be amply sufficient to maintain better equipped regiments than any in the army of the Sultan, precautions must be taken against their being borrowed by the Porte.

Finally, in order to give to the man whom Europe will hold responsible for the good government of the province liberty to carry out an improved policy in every Department of his Administration, a similar independence might be extended to the fiscal regulations of the Pashalic. The amount of tribute to be paid to the Porte once being ascertained, all other arrangements affecting the financial prosperity of the country should be determined by local considerations.

Such are the inexhaustible riches of its soil, the magnificent extent of its three great plains of Cœle-Syria, the Hauran, and Esdraelon, the facilities it possesses for the manufacture of silk, and, probably, for the growth of cotton, that it is to be expected, if only life and property were secure, the resources of the country would become second only to those of Egypt.

But this scheme, however plausible, must fall to the ground unless we be able to discover a man of sufficient intelligence, energy, and experience to serve as key-stone to the arch, and to command the suffrages of the European Powers.

In looking for such a person one's attention is naturally directed towards his Excellency Fuad Pasha. Though, undoubtedly, his conduct since arriving in the country may present many grave occasions for criticism, yet, on the whole, if we take into account the difficulties of his position, the unparalleled nature of the emergency he had to meet, and the utter absence of trustworthy assistants, it is impossible to deny that he has exhibited an amount of skill and prudence that might well qualify him for the post in question.

Nevertheless I am bound to add, that it is rather by a just appreciation of what it was necessary to do than by any great administrative ability that his Excellency's conduct has been distinguished; I might even be inclined to say, did not the deficiency of his resources plead in his favour, that he is not conspicuous for any great powers of organization, and that a person less talented, but with equal judgment and more pertinacity, would be better suited to the emergency. On the whole, however, perhaps, it would be difficult to find among Turkish Statesmen a man more fitted for the post.

It may be with justice objected to the above proposal, that to erect the Province of Syria into a single Pashalic, and to invest the Governor-General with such extraordinary privileges, might be considered to inaugurate the dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire. It is certainly impossible to deny that the plan involves the placing of the civil and military organization of the Province on a semi-independent footing, but it seems to me possible the transition from one condition to the other might be effected in a manner sufficiently imperceptible to escape the evil consequences attendant on any violent change of system.

Although it might be necessary to surround the position of the new Pasha with such circumstances of splendour as are wont to beguile the imagination of mankind, he would still remain the servant of the Sultan, and the Governor, not the Viceroy, of the Province. It might even be stipulated that, at the expiration of a certain term, His Imperial Majesty should resume the direct administration of the country.

Should the scheme, however, be thus far considered unobjectionable, we are still distant from a solution of the difficulty. It is true we may have constructed our machinery; we may have even found a man capable of superintending it: but whence is the motive power to be derived that is to set it all in action? Where shall we discover the capital it will be necessary to sink in constituting an Administration, in equipping an army, in repairing the devastations which have paralyzed the energies of the population? A sum of three millions sterling would hardly be sufficient to cover these expenses, and as I have had the honour of informing your Excellency in a previous despatch, Fuad Pasha has scarcely five shillings at his disposal.

If once security were established, and the resources of the country were developed, the surplus of the revenue would suffice to pay off a debt to the above amount in a very few years; but to create that security, and to develop these resources, we require what cannot be obtained unless they shall already have been called into existence. We are moving in a vicious circle. I do not know whether, under these circumstances, it might be considered advisable by the Governments of Europe to cut the Gordian knot with a golden sword, but at present such an expedient seems the only one capable of saving the country from complete disorganization.

Turning, however, from the consideration of this part of the question,

I will now proceed to examine the constitution of the Lebanon, and the mode in which it could be worked up into the general plan. If we had before us a *tabula rasa*, I should be inclined to say that the simplest and most practical arrangement would be to assimilate the Mountain to the rest of the Pashalic, and entrust its administration to the Governor of the Province.

There can be little doubt but that the late massacres, and all the wars, quarrels, and disturbances which have agitated the Lebanon for the last fifteen years, may be attributed to the dissatisfaction of the Turkish Government with the partial autonomy it enjoyed. Their policy has been to prove the scheme adopted by the Great Powers in 1845 impossible. With this object in view, they stimulated, as occasion served, the chronic animosity existing between Maronites and Druses.

In proportion as foreign influences exalted the arrogance and fanaticism of the Christians, their independence became more insufferable to the Turks, and a determination was arrived at to inflict on them, through the instrumentality of the Druses, a severer measure of chastisement than they had yet received. What occurred at Hasbeya, Rasheya, and Deir-el-Kamar was an exaggeration of the plan. Koorshid Pasha and his accomplices were incapable of carrying so subtle a policy into execution: the play was over-acted, and an "eselandre" took place.

As long, therefore, as the principle of Turkish rule in Syria continues to be accepted, their exclusion from the Mountain is incompatible with its tranquillity. By making it the interest of the Government to compel peace instead of to excite war, we shall obtain the best security for the maintenance of harmony between the hostile tribes.

I am well aware that the effect of such an arrangement would be to crown that policy with success which for the last fifteen years has been pursued by the Turks with such ruthless and wicked perseverance. But under the circumstances we must be content to sacrifice a mere sentiment of poetical justice to whatever promises a chance of practical improvement.

Moreover, it must be remembered that I would not venture to advocate such a change, unless in combination with the erection of a strong and independent Government in Syria, whose motions can be watched, and whose interest it will be to conciliate, by its irreproachable conduct, the goodwill of the European Powers. The Sultan feels himself a necessity to Europe, and at liberty to set all criticism at defiance; but a Governor of Syria, designated by Europe, would understand that his tenure of office depended on his good conduct. Such a sentiment is evidently never absent from the mind of the Pasha of Egypt, and the nervous alacrity with which he provided against the spread of Syrian fanaticism to Cairo was very remarkable.

Nevertheless, desirable as it might be to continue the complete unity of Syria, there is one important circumstance which may render the accomplishment of such a project impossible. I doubt whether France would consent that the Kesrouan and the pure Maronite districts should be despoiled of their privileges. In fact, her desire is the very contrary of this. She wishes to extend the Christian Kaimakamship over the whole Mountain. But to this arrangement I am of opinion neither Turkey nor England ought on any account to consent. If, therefore, her aversion to the plan of complete assimilation be found unconquerable, some compromise must be attempted.

Late events have demonstrated that the Christians must be no longer subjected to Druse supremacy. But the admission of this principle implies the assertion of its converse. If Druses cannot be suffered to govern Christians, certainly Christians must not govern Druses. The Mixed districts therefore, that is to say, the whole of the Lebanon south of the road leading from Beyrout to Damascus, must be handed over to the jurisdiction of some third party, and that party can only be the Turk. It would seem, then, that the best practical arrangement for the Lebanon would be to allow the Northern division, which is solely inhabited by Christians, to retain its Kaimakam, and to suffer the remainder of the Mountain to be governed by the same method as the rest of the province.

In order, however, to mitigate as much as possible the inconvenience of an *imperium in imperio*, I would recommend that the Kaimakam should be nominated by the Governor-General; the Christian Mokatas or heritable fiefs should be abolished; and that the feudal Sheikhs should be converted into officers appointed during good behaviour. To these details, however, I should not wish to pledge myself.

It is very much to be feared that, no matter what is done, the Mountain will be always subject to foreign and domestic intrigues. Every advantage will be taken of the shortcomings of the new Government to excite the sympathies of Europe in favour of an extension, to all the Christians of the Lebanon, of the privileges enjoyed by the Kesronas. It is undoubtedly much to be lamented that any Christian community should be subject to Mahometan rule, but it is a principle accepted by Europe, and in this respect the Southern Lebanese will be no worse off than their co-religionists of Damascus, of Mount Hermon, and of the rest of the Empire.

If, therefore, the composition of the Mountain should be effected as I propose, it is to be hoped that the consenting Powers who exercise influence over its inhabitants will forbid their agents to countenance the intrigues of an interested and unscrupulous priesthood to disturb an arrangement which, with all its evils, is probably the best that can be devised.

Before concluding, it is necessary to discuss one important consideration. What assurance are we likely to possess that the semi-independent Prince we shall have constituted does not become the tool of some European Power? Against such a danger, perhaps, it will be difficult to guard. Already in Egypt we see influences at work which have aroused suspicions in many observing minds. I cannot but think, however, that more importance is attached to these insidious practices than a just appreciation of their character requires.

It is well understood by all these minor Potentates that England is quite content with the *status quo*, and that, therefore, they can rely on her support and countenance. To other Powers they attribute ulterior designs menacing their safety.

With the servility natural to Orientals, they endeavour to conciliate those they fear by the basest subserviency, while they occasionally evince to their well-wishers a flippant discourtesy. This conduct naturally offends the susceptibility of the Consular Agents of the friendly Power, who on a hundred minor occasions fail in procuring that attention to their requisitions and advice which they see lavished on their colleagues.

An impression is thus created that the influence of a rival Government is all-powerful, and the final process of annexation imminent. Yet a little reflection would incline one to consider that the hold thus obtained upon the country is less intimate than might be imagined. Consequently, I am disposed to hope that, though we may expect great subserviency on the part of the Government of Syria to those States whose influence over the Mountain will excite its fears, yet, so great must be the jealousy it would entertain of any Power whose manifest intention it would be, did occasion offer, to convert the Lebanon into a fortress, garrisoned by dependents of its own, that it must naturally lean for support on whichever of the European Governments it is convinced is least inclined to entertain nefarious designs on so important a portion of its dominion.

I have thus, to the best of my ability, submitted to your Excellency a description of the arrangements I would venture to recommend should be adopted in reference to this country, together with some of the considerations which may be urged on their behalf. I only trust that I shall not be thought presumptuous in having done so. I am aware that my proposal may appear but a crude and undigested plan; but your own acquaintance with the subject will enable your Excellency to supply most of the deficiencies. If I should be thought to have exceeded my functions in suggesting the adoption of such a principle as is implied in the arrangements I propose, I would again venture to remind you that I have entered upon this question thus prematurely in order, as I have said before, to have the advantage of knowing your Excellency's opinion before the subject is discussed by the Commission. We are still occupied with the first

portion of our task, and some time is likely to elapse before we take into our consideration the reorganization of the Lebanon.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 9 in No. 240.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, November 3, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to transmit, for your Excellency's information, copy of the Protocol of the sixth sitting of the Syrian Commission, held on the 20th ultimo.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 10 in No. 240.

Protocol of the Sixth Meeting of the Syrian Commission, held at Beyrout, October 26, 1860.

LE Vendredi, vingt-six Octobre, mil huit cent soixante, tous les Commissaires se trouvant réunies à Beyrout, chez le Commissaire Extraordinaire de la Sublime Porte, la séance est ouverte à deux heures et demie, sous la présidence de son Excellence Fuad Pacha.

Après la lecture et l'adoption du procès-verbal de la séance précédente, le Président, prenant la parole, exprime la satisfaction qu'il éprouve en venant pour la première fois s'associer aux travaux de la Commission. Dans l'accomplissement de la tâche, à la fois honorable et pénible, qui lui a été confiée par son Gouvernement, il espère que les concours des Commissaires ne lui fera jamais défaut.

Quant à lui il réunit dans sa personne un double caractère, celui de fonctionnaire investi d'attributions exceptionnelles et exécutives, en vertu des pleins pouvoirs qui lui ont été conférés par son Souverain, et celui de membre de la Commission qu'il a l'honneur de présider.

La poursuite et le châtement des coupables d'une part, en second lieu les réparations dues aux victimes, enfin les mesures à prendre pour prévenir le retour de pareilles calamités, tels sont les principaux points qu'il a en vue et auxquels le Gouvernement du Sultan est plus intéressé encore que l'Europe elle-même. Or, rien ne pourra l'empêcher de mener à bonne fin cette entreprise, en ce qui concerne particulièrement la punition des coupables; ni leur nombre, ni leur qualité ne seront un obstacle à la réalisation de l'œuvre vengeresse dont il est chargé.

Fuad Pacha entre ensuite dans quelques explications sur les actes accomplis par lui tant à Damas que dans la Montagne: à Damas, où la justice a déjà frappé des criminels de tout rang; dans la Montagne, où il reste encore beaucoup à faire. Mû par un intérêt d'humanité, intérêt connu à toutes les Puissances représentées dans le sein de la Commission, le Plénipotentiaire Ottoman se flatte de n'être suspect d'aucune arrière-pensée, et de pouvoir, par conséquent, faire appel au bon vouloir de la Commission. Il comblera les lacunes qui lui seront signalées, mais tout en sollicitant les avis dont il a besoin, il désire que ses conseils soient exempts de tout esprit de censure. La censure engendre la discorde, tandis qu'une bienveillance réciproque ne peut que faciliter le résultat auquel tendent les efforts communs.

Le Commissaire d'Autriche, en réponse au discours de Fuad Pacha, fait observer que des deux qualités réunies dans la personne du Plénipotentiaire Ottoman la Commission ne doit se préoccuper que d'une seule, celle qui lui vaut l'avantage de le compter dans son sein comme collègue et comme Président. Il reconnaît pleinement la communauté d'intérêts

qui existe entre tous les Commissaires, et il croit pouvoir promettre en leur nom le concours qui leur est demandé. Il ne doute pas non plus que justice se fasse, mais il pense que la justice proprement dite ne suffit pas: l'Europe attend autre chose du Commissaire Extraordinaire de la Sublime Porte. Les pleins pouvoirs dont il est armé lui permettent de déployer une extrême sévérité et de faire éclater ainsi l'indignation que les massacres de la Syrie ont dû causer à son Gouvernement. Il importe également que les Tribunaux soient animés d'un pareil esprit, surtout vis-à-vis des Chefs Druses, qui sont tous coupables, les uns pour avoir agi, les autres pour avoir laissé faire.

Fuad Pacha, répliquant à M. de Weckbecker, rappelle qu'en fait de sévérité il peut déjà citer des preuves. A Damas, en un seul jour des centaines de condamnations ont été prononcées. Un Mushir a payé de sa tête les griefs qui lui étaient imputés. Il est donc tout-à-fait d'accord avec le préopinant. A son avis ce n'est pas seulement parce que l'Europe les réclame qu'il est tenu d'accorder les satisfactions, mais parce que son Gouvernement le juge nécessaire, et qu'en cela il rencontre le sentiment général de l'Europe.

Le Commissaire d'Autriche, chargé par ses collègues d'adresser quelques interpellations au Plénipotentiaire Ottoman, lui soumet d'abord la question relative au Colonel Hosni Bek, dont la présence parmi les membres du Tribunal Extraordinaire de Beyrouth cause un certain scandale, vu les charges qui paraissent peser sur lui, en sa qualité d'ancien Commandant de la garnison de Baalbek.

Fuad Pacha répond que cet officier s'est bien comporté dans les premiers procès de Damas; il fournit à ce sujet quelques détails sur la composition du jury militaire qu'il a cru devoir instituer. Le Colonel Hosni Bek en faisait partie comme ayant été désigné par le régiment. Néanmoins, et bien qu'aucune accusation formelle n'ait été dirigée contre lui jusqu'à ce jour, sa conduite sera soumise à une enquête minutieuse. Il sera d'abord éloigné provisoirement du tribunal.

Le Commissaire Français explique les motifs qui l'ont déterminé à appeler le premier l'attention de ses collègues sur les bruits auxquels donnaient lieu les antécédents du Colonel Hosni Bek. La plupart des officiers de l'armée Ottomane étaient plus ou moins compromis, mais rien ne les signalait particulièrement à l'animadversion publique, tandis que le Colonel Hosni Bek, en raison de la position exceptionnelle qu'il occupait dans le Tribunal de Beyrouth, avait dû soulever plus d'animosité et rendre l'opinion plus sévère sur la part de responsabilité qui lui est attribuée dans les événements de Baalbek.

Le Commissaire Prussien, et après lui M. de Weckbecker, fournissent quelques indications sur la nature de la culpabilité qu'on impute au Colonel Hosni Bek, lequel semble d'ailleurs moins gravement compromis qu'Hassan Yazeji, Commandant des Bashi-bozouk, et que divers membres de la famille Harfush.

Fuad Pacha dit que, à Damas, comme dans les autres localités qu'il a visitées, il a tout fait pour provoquer les dénonciations des Chrétiens. Il ne recherche que la vérité, bien loin de vouloir soustraire qui que ce soit aux poursuites de la justice. Aussi s'empressera-t-il de recueillir de nouvelles informations. Quant à la famille Harfush il rappelle que c'est une famille de brigands.

Le Commissaire Russe, en réponse aux explications fournies dans une séance précédente par Abro Efendi, sur la personne de Shakir Pacha, ci-devant Chef du Medjlis Militaire de Damas, expose que la conduite de ce fonctionnaire lui avait été signalée par la voix publique comme ayant donné lieu à de graves soupçons. Pendant la première nuit de l'émeute se trouvant avec ses officiers dans le voisinage du quartier Chrétien, il aurait assisté en spectateur indifférent aux progrès de l'incendie et du pillage.

M. Novikow avait également pensé qu'un Chef d'Etat-Major, appelé par ses fonctions mêmes à être dans le secret de toutes les dispositions du Seraskier, devait porter une bonne part de la responsabilité de son Chef. Ayant appris, depuis, que Shakir Pacha avait été jugé et acquitté par un masbata, il réserve son appréciation définitive à ce sujet pour le moment où il aura pu prendre connaissance des dossiers.

Le Président donne des éclaircissements sur les circonstances dans lesquelles Shakir Pacha a été acquitté non par le tribunal de Damas, mais par le Conseil de Guerre. Le jury militaire assermenté qui s'est prononcé sur la culpabilité ou sur l'innocence des prévenus, comptait dans son sein un officier Prussien au service de la Porte. Tout s'est passé régulièrement. Non seulement il a été reconnu que Shakir Pacha avait fait son devoir, mais encore qu'il avait contribué à sauver un grand nombre de Chrétiens.

Le Commissaire Français, suivant l'engagement pris par lui dans la séance précédente, interpelle le Plénipotentiaire Ottoman à propos des massacres de Saida. Il rappelle qu'un nombre considérable de Chrétiens fugitifs ont été égorgés aux portes de Saida, lorsqu'ils venaient y chercher un asile. Les poursuites exercées jusqu'ici contre les auteurs de pareils forfaits lui semblent insuffisantes.

Fuad Pacha répond qu'il n'a passé que deux jours à Saida. Durant son séjour dans cette ville il s'est entouré de toutes les informations possibles. M. Krantz, Commandant du navire de guerre Français la "Sentinelle," M. Gaillardot, médecin Français, le Vice-Consul d'Espagne, et d'autres ont été interrogés par lui et n'ont fourni que des renseignements vagues.

Néanmoins plusieurs arrestations ont eu lieu, et bon nombre d'enrôlements forcés ont été opérés. Qu'on fasse des dénonciations et les accusés seront poursuivis.

Le Commissaire Français fait observer que les autorités Ottomanes civiles ou militaires, dans toutes les localités où se sont produites des scènes de meurtre ou de pillage, doivent être tenues pour responsables de ce qui s'est passé sous leurs yeux. C'est aux dépositaires de la force publique qu'on doit s'en prendre, soit pour avoir favorisé, soit pour n'avoir pas réprimé les désordres.

Cette remarque s'applique à Saida, comme aux autres points de la Syrie où le sang Chrétien a été versé.

Fuad Pacha promet, pour la séance suivante, un compte-rendu succinct de tout ce qu'il a fait jusqu'à présent. Il répète qu'il est prêt à combler les lacunes qui lui seront signalées, ainsi qu'à utiliser le concours et les lumières de ses collègues. Comme fonctionnaire Ottoman, il doit défendre l'indépendance et l'autonomie de son pays; en dehors de cette préoccupation il connaît trop bien le caractère de la mission dont il est chargé pour prétendre en retirer aucune gloire. C'est comme justicier qu'il a été envoyé en Syrie, et il saura remplir sa tâche jusqu'au bout.

M. Bécclard croit être l'interprète fidèle de la Commission tout entière en disant qu'il lui tarde de sortir de la phase si pénible de la répression, pour n'avoir plus à s'occuper que des travaux relatifs aux indemnités et à la réorganisation du Liban.

Lord Dufferin déclare qu'il trouve insuffisante la concession aux termes de laquelle les Commissaires peuvent assister, ou se faire représenter par des délégués, aux audiences du Tribunal Extraordinaire de Beyrouth. Il réclame pour les délégués le droit de concourir à la recherche de la vérité, en suggérant au tribunal les questions qu'il leur paraissait nécessaire d'adresser, soit aux prévenus, soit aux témoins.

A ce propos et sur la demande de M. de Rehues, Lord Dufferin explique un incident qui s'est produit dans le cours de l'une des dernières audiences. Le délégué Britannique a cru devoir interpellé le greffier sur la question de savoir s'il avait inscrit la déclaration d'un témoin à décharge. On s'est aperçu ainsi que cette déclaration n'avait pas été inscrite.

Le Commissaire d'Autriche appuie la motion de Lord Dufferin, mais en la modifiant; il pense que les délégués doivent assister aux audiences comme simple spectateurs, et que les Commissaires seuls, sur le rapport de leurs délégués, sont recevables à présenter des observations dans le sein de la Commission.

Lord Dufferin maintient son opinion, attendu, dit-il, que les délégués, en suivant pas à pas la marche du procès sont à même de suggérer des avis dont l'effet sera d'autant meilleur qu'il sera instantané.

MM. Bécclard et Novikow partagent la manière de voir du Commissaire d'Autriche. Ils craignent que les délégués, par leur intervention

personnelle, n'exercent une influence quelconque sur le tribunal, ou ne préjugent l'opinion des Commissaires eux-mêmes.

Fuad Pacha répond que, d'après ses instructions, le jugement est réservé à l'autorité locale; les délégués ne pourraient donc y participer sans porter atteinte aux formes prescrites. Il rappelle d'ailleurs que l'instruction une fois terminée, le procès-verbal est présenté à l'accusé, qui, avant de le signer, peut faire ses réserves. C'est pour lui un moyen de contrôle.

M. de Rehfuës demande s'il ne serait pas possible que l'accusé fût assisté d'un défenseur ou vekil.

Fuad Pacha ne nie pas que l'institution des défenseurs ne rendent de grands services dans les pays où elle a été adoptée. Mais, là où elle n'existe pas, une pareille institution ne peut être introduite du jour au lendemain. Il fait valoir le manque d'hommes et la différence d'habitude pour prouver que la chose serait impraticable en Syrie.

Une longue discussion s'engage à ce propos. Lord Dufferin pense que l'isolément auquel le prévenu se trouve réduit le met dans l'impossibilité de préparer ses moyens de défense et de faire comparaître les témoins dont la déposition lui serait utile. Fuad Pacha lui répond que le prévenu n'a qu'à désigner ses témoins au Tribunal, qui ne manquera jamais de les convoquer. M. Bécclard fait observer que si l'accusé est privé de défenseur, il n'a pas non plus vis-à-vis de lui l'accusateur public: l'une des deux lacunes est corrigée par l'autre. Fuad Pacha signale les abus qui ne manqueraient pas de se produire si le prévenu était autorisé à choisir un défenseur. Ce dernier pour se procurer des témoignages favorables serait trop disposé à recourir aux moyens les moins avouables.

M. Novikow revient sur la question de l'enquête judiciaire. La Commission, dit-il, ne peut remplir le mandat qui lui est tracé par ses instructions identiques qu'en étant admise à faire valoir auprès des Juges son opinion tant sur la marche que sur le résultat de toute enquête partielle; de son côté la Porte dans les instructions dont elle a muni son Plénipotentiaire assimile le grand procès mixte pendant devant les tribunaux Ottomans. La Commission se trouve investie par là d'un droit d'intervention exactement pareil à celui qu'exercent en Turquie les Missions et les Consuls, dans tout procès mixte jugé par les tribunaux du pays. Partant de ce point de vue le Commissaire Russe croit pouvoir résumer ainsi le vœu de la Commission: "Admise déjà à suivre la marche du procès, elle demande également qu'après que les interrogatoires auront été terminés, aucun arrêt définitif ne soit prononcé sans qu'elle ait eu la faculté de formuler préalablement son avis sur l'ensemble de l'enquête, et de suggérer, s'il y a lieu, à son Excellence Fuad Pacha les éléments d'un interrogatoire supplémentaire qu'elle jugerait nécessaire pour éclairer sa conscience." Cette motion est appuyée par tous les Commissaires.

Fuad Pacha explique que les tribunaux extraordinaires institués par lui ne rendent pas de jugements proprement dits, mais se bornent à lui adresser des rapports dont les conclusions seraient sans effet si elles n'étaient confirmées par lui. D'après les lois Ottomanes, aucune sentence de mort ne peut être exécutée si elle n'est revêtue de la sanction souveraine. C'est donc en vertu de ses pleins pouvoirs qu'il convertit en sentences définitives les conclusions des rapports qui lui sont soumis. Il ne se refuse pas à communiquer dorénavant les susdits rapports à la Commission, qui pourra lui dire ce qu'elle en pense.

Cette proposition est acceptée à l'unanimité.

Fuad Pacha demande à présenter quelques observations sur le passage du dernier procès-verbal dans lequel il est question de l'arrivée à Beyrouth des notables récemment condamnés. Le cortège qui les accompagnait n'était autre chose qu'une garde de sûreté. Quant aux litières qui servaient à transporter deux des condamnés, elles leur avaient été accordées pour cause de vieillesse et de maladie.

Le Plénipotentiaire Ottoman entre ensuite dans de longs détails sur les circonstances qui ont précédé la condamnation du Sheikh Abdallah-el-Halebi, et des autres membres du Grand Conseil. Il énumère les charges que l'opinion publique faisait peser sur eux, mais sans qu'aucune preuve eût été fournie à l'appui de ces accusations. Il rend compte des recherches auxquelles ils s'est livré à l'effet de résoudre la question de savoir s'il y

avait eu réellement complot; il cite enfin les différents Articles traduits du Code Français qu'on pouvait appliquer aux prévenus. Leur culpabilité en définitive résultait de ce qu'ils n'avaient pas pris les mesures nécessaires pour empêcher les désordres. L'un d'eux a été condamné à la réclusion perpétuelle dans une forteresse; deux autres à quinze ans de prison; trois, à dix ans de réclusion; les cinq derniers à trois ans d'exil. Les dossiers relatifs à leur procès ne sont pas clos. Si de nouvelles charges s'élèvent contre eux, leur peine pourra être aggravée; jusque là ils seront envoyés à proximité dans l'île de Chypre. Quant à cette dernière décision Fuad Pacha consulte cependant la Commission, qui déclare n'y trouver aucun inconvénient.

M. Bécclard rappelle que dans le memorandum adressé au Plénipotentiaire Ottoman dès le jour de la première réunion des Commissaires, il était parlé du désarmement générale de la population de Damas, comme d'une mesure indispensable. Il y ajoute le vœu qu'une contribution spéciale soit imposée à la population Musulmane au profit des Chrétiens.

Fuad Pacha répond que le désarmement s'opère en ce moment même et par son ordre. Il s'est également occupé au début de sa mission de la question relative à l'impôt qu'il s'agit de faire peser sur la population Musulmane, et ce projet n'est pas abandonné par lui.

Interpellé par M. de Rehfuës à propos de la proclamation attribuée à Abdallah-el-Halebi, Fuad Pacha déclare sur l'honneur que personne ne lui en a jamais parlé à Damas; aussi a-t-il été fort étonné d'apprendre que des copies de ce document avaient été circulées à Constantinople.

La discussion relative à la défense des accusés est reprise sur la demande de Lord Dufferin, qui donne lecture de différentes pièces tendant à établir que les interrogatoires judiciaires auxquels ont pu assister les délégués de la Commission n'ont pas été dirigés d'une manière équitable; il réclame plus de garanties pour les accusés.

Fuad Pacha, en réponse à cette demande, signale de nouveau les difficultés qui s'opposent à ce que des changements soient introduits dans la procédure, ainsi que les inconvénients attachés à l'intervention directe des délégués.

M. de Weckbecker déclare qu'à son point de vue la Commission n'est pas investie du mandat que lui attribue Lord Dufferin. Elle est tenue seulement de provoquer la punition des coupables.

Les Commissaires d'Angleterre et de Prusse s'élèvent contre cette opinion; ils pensent que la Commission est intéressée avant tout à la découverte de la vérité.

À des interpellations réitérées de Lord Dufferin et de M. de Rehfuës, Fuad Pacha répond que sans s'engager à permettre aux accusés de recourir à l'assistance de défenseurs, il recherchera avec soin les moyens d'entourer leur défense de toutes les garanties possibles. Il y est plus intéressé que personne, puisque c'est lui qui signe les sentences de mort, et qui en supporte la responsabilité.

M. Novikow exprime l'intention d'interpeller Fuad Pacha au sujet de la réinstallation des Chrétiens dans les villages de la Montagne; mais vu l'heure avancée, il est convenu, sur la proposition du Président, que cette question sera traitée à fond dans la séance suivante.

La réinstallation des Chrétiens et toutes les questions qui s'y rattachent sont donc mises à l'ordre du jour, et la séance est levée à six heures et quart.

(Suivent les signatures.)

Inclosure 11 in No. 240.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrouth, November 3, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to inclose, for your Excellency's information, copy of the Protocol of the seventh sitting of the Commission.

The subject proposed for our consideration was the reparation of the houses of the Christians, and the precautions to be taken against the exigencies of the winter.

An unanimous opinion was expressed by the European Commissioners as to the gravity of the emergency, and the necessity for immediate action, and no one could have accepted with greater alacrity than Fuad Pasha the various suggestions that were made as to the steps to be taken. Nevertheless, the sum total of our proceedings may be said to have consisted in a simple avowal of insolvency, and an appeal *ad misericordiam* on the part of his Excellency.

I cannot say how alarmed I am become at the aspect of affairs. In vain we have debated the various expedients by which money may be obtained—a fine on the city of Damascus; an impost on all the towns of Syria; a contribution levied on the Druses. No method has presented itself which seems likely to be productive of any very satisfactory result. His Excellency stated that he had enough money to carry the province through the winter; but I very much doubt if this can be the case. His army is six, twelve, twenty months, in arrear: no provision of fuel, corn, or forage, has been made, either for the soldiers or the refugees. The allowances distributed for the reconstruction of the villages is insufficient to provide each family with a single room; and people are already beginning to be picked up dying on the hill-side.

All the sums accruing from Customs and port dues, though already mortgaged at Constantinople, have been seized, and the destitution of the Government is daily illustrated by the petty shifts to which it condescends in order to make one piastre do the work of two.

In the meantime, the emigration still continues from Damascus, no more than 2,000 adults being now left within its walls. On the Mountain, Christians and Druses alike express their apprehensions of a famine: while the numbers on the lists of the Anglo-American Relief Committee have increased during the last week from 23,000 to 29,000 persons.

In fact, the disorganization in the Government is gradually leading to a decomposition of society.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 12 in No. 240.

Protocol of the Seventh Meeting of the Syrian Commission, held at Beyrout, October 30, 1860.

LE Mardi, trente Octobre, mil huit cent soixante, tous les Commissaires étant réunis à Beyrout chez le Commissaire Extraordinaire de la Sublime Porte, la séance est ouverte à deux heures et demie, sous la présidence de son Excellence Fuad Pacha.

Le procès-verbal ayant été lu et adopté, Fuad Pacha s'excuse de n'avoir pu encore, faute de temps, terminer le travail destiné à la Commission, dans lequel seront exposés les actes accomplis par lui depuis son arrivée en Syrie.

La question à l'ordre du jour, dit-il ensuite, est celle du rétablissement des Chrétiens dans leurs foyers. Ce sujet est étroitement lié à l'un des trois points dans lesquels se résume la tâche à l'accomplissement de laquelle la Commission doit concourir, savoir, la répression, la réparation, et la réorganisation. Pour le rétablissement des Chrétiens, on a fait jusqu'à présent tout ce qu'il était possible de faire avec des moyens bornés. A Damas, trois quartiers Musulmans ont été évacués pour y loger les Chrétiens, jusque là réfugiés dans la citadelle. Ce qu'on a pu retrouver des effets pillés, en fait de couvertures et autres objets de première nécessité, leur a été distribué, non à titre de restitution, mais à titre de secours. Il a été, en outre, alloué à chaque Chrétien une ration de pain et cinquante paras par jour. Ces distributions ont lieu sous la surveillance de divers Comités composés de notables Chrétiens. De là résulte une dépense de 500,000 à 600,000 piastres par mois. Les objets de literie n'ayant pas suffi, une réquisition faite parmi les Musulmans a fourni 2,000 ou 3,000 matelas. Dans la Montagne avant que la Commission ne fût réunie à Beyrout, des Comités spéciaux parcouraient déjà les villages pour évaluer les dépenses de reconstruction, et, sur leur rapport, des à-comptes

ont été repartis entre les ayant-droit. Depuis lors la Commission a demandé que ses délégués fussent admis à faire partie de ces Comités; mais comme le travail d'évaluation tire à sa fin, la présence des délégués servira plutôt à assurer l'exécution des mesures arrêtées pour la reconstruction des villages. La grande difficulté consiste dans la question d'argent: le Gouvernement fait tous ses efforts pour s'en procurer, y compris les paiements à effectuer sous peu de jours: la dépense s'élève déjà à environ 4,500,000 piastres. Or, cela ne suffit pas. Il importe de faire recouvrer une partie des maisons avant l'hiver. A cet effet tous les Druses et Musulmans ont été frappés de réquisitions pour des bois à fournir aux Chrétiens. On a également séquestré au profit de ces derniers les mulets appartenant aux Druses de la Bekaa. Enfin l'ordre a été donné de partager entre les Chrétiens une partie des denrées qui seront trouvées chez les Druses, sauf à en tenir compte ultérieurement à ceux-ci.

Le Commissaire Français dit avoir appris que dans certains villages Mixtes beaucoup de maisons se trouvaient vacantes par suite du départ des Druses qui ont fui vers le Hauran: il demande que ces maisons soient assignées provisoirement aux Chrétiens. Il ajoute que, lors des derniers événements, les Chrétiens de la partie Mixte du Liban n'ayant pu faire leurs récoltes, ces récoltes ont été accaparées par les Druses qui les possèdent aujourd'hui en magasin. L'équité lui paraît exiger que la moitié au moins des grains en question soit attribué aux Chrétiens. Il réclame enfin pour les habitants de Zahlé qui travaillent à la reconstruction de leurs maisons, la faculté de couper des bois dans les forêts voisines. Cette faculté, dont ils ont toujours joui, paraît leur être refusée en ce moment, sans qu'on puisse s'expliquer le motif d'une pareille prohibition.

Fuad Pacha, en réponse à la première observation de M. Béchard, dit qu'à Deir-el-Kamar et dans les villages voisins on a déjà installé un certain nombre de Chrétiens dans les maisons des Druses. On agira de même toutes les fois que cette mesure sera praticable. Quant aux dépôts de grains, on les met en réquisition partout où il en existe. Des ordres ont été donnés, à plusieurs reprises différentes, pour que les Chrétiens de Zahlé puissent couper dans les forêts de la plaine de Baalbek les bois de charpente dont ils ont besoin. Ces ordres seront renouvelés. Non seulement les Chrétiens ont la faculté de couper des bois dans le voisinage de Zahlé, mais ils usent de la permission qui leur est donnée en allant faire des coupes jusqu'aux environs de Damas.

Le Commissaire Français demande à présenter une dernière observation au sujet des Chrétiens de Baalbek, de Zahlé, et d'autres localités qui, au printemps de cette année, ont payé d'avance l'impôt du "miri." Placé ensuite dans l'impossibilité de récolter les grains qui constituent leur unique ressource, les habitants dont il s'agit se voient plongés dans la plus profonde misère. C'est pourquoi le Commissaire Français pense qu'il serait juste, soit de leur restituer ce qu'ils ont payé par anticipation, soit de les exempter du paiement de l'impôt de l'année prochaine.

Fuad Pacha répond que cette proposition sera examinée et prise, s'il y a lieu, en considération.

M. Novikow appuie la motion du Commissaire Français en ce qui concerne les maisons abandonnées par les Druses. Il voudrait même qu'en cas d'urgence on fit pour la Montagne ce qui a été fait à Damas.

Fuad Pacha fait observer que la mesure prise à Damas est d'une exécution moins facile dans le Liban, où il y a peu de maisons à proprement parler, mais seulement des cabanes à peine suffisantes pour l'habitation d'une famille entière. Les Chrétiens, d'ailleurs, préfèrent être chez eux et ne s'installent qu'avec répugnance dans des maisons qui ne leur appartiennent pas.

Le Plénipotentiaire Ottoman revient sur la question du numéraire. La difficulté qu'il éprouve à se procurer des fonds paralyse les bonnes intentions dont il est animé. Déjà les revenus de la douane de Beyrout sont affectés aux soulagements des besoins les plus pressants. Sur une somme de 2,500,000 piastres reçue de Constantinople et destinée à l'entretien des troupes Fuad Pacha dit avoir retenu 2,250,000 piastres pour la reconstruction des villages. Au surplus, il est en mesure de communiquer à la Commission un état exact des sommes déjà distribuées

aux Chrétiens, tant en secours journaliers que pour les frais de bâtisse. Le total des dépenses, ainsi effectuées, s'élève à 1,289,933 piastres d'une part, et 1,531,344 piastres de l'autre. Il reste à payer dans un bref délai environ 2,350,000 piastres. (Voir les deux pièces annexées au présent procès-verbal.)

Le Commissaire Russe appelle l'attention du Plénipotentiaire Ottoman sur les mesures à prendre en faveur des Chrétiens de l'Anti-Liban, c'est-à-dire, des habitants de Hasbeya et de Rasheya, lesquels, au nombre de plusieurs milliers, sont réfugiés à Beyrouth, et dans les autres villes de la côte.

Fuad Pacha explique que les Chrétiens en question n'ont pas tous souffert, mais que ceux mêmes dont les maisons avaient été épargnées ont pris la fuite et sont descendus vers le littoral. L'autorité leur est venue en aide. Pour ceux qui peuvent dès à présent rentrer chez eux, il ne s'agit que de garantir leur sécurité. Deux bataillons occupent à cet effet Hasbeya et Rasheya. Une Commission spéciale surveille la récolte des olives. Ordre est donné de couper les bois appartenant aux Druses et de faire des réquisitions dans les villages voisins pour hâter les travaux de reconstruction.

M. Novikow trouve ces mesures tardives, vu la saison avancée. Il doute que les Chrétiens puissent rentrer dans leurs foyers avant le printemps. En ce cas, on devrait faire en sorte qu'ils trouvassent des ressources momentanées dans les villes du littoral. En outre, les Chrétiens paraissent conserver des craintes à l'égard des Druses, qui ont déjà reparu en grand nombre dans les villages Mixtes et sont tous armés. Vis-à-vis des Chrétiens désarmés, au contraire, les Druses doivent conserver tout leur orgueil, car la répression ne les a pas suffisamment atteints.

Fuad Pacha répond en ce qui concerne la répression exercée contre les Druses, que son intention, ainsi qu'il en a fait part au Général de Beaufort, a été plutôt de les rassurer et de les déterminer ainsi à rester dans leurs villages. Ceux qui s'étaient enfuis commencent en effet à rentrer, et bientôt, grâce aux dénonciations des Chrétiens, comme aux révélations de Sheikhs actuellement détenus à Beyrouth, on pourra saisir simultanément les individus les plus compromis. Déjà on a mis la main sur plusieurs d'entre eux : quelques détachements parcourent le Hauran et font aussi des arrestations.

M. Bécclard croit devoir signaler comme ayant pris part, dit-on, aux massacres de Deir-el-Kamar un certain Ali Riza récemment placé à la tête de l'un des quatre cercles, dont se compose provisoirement l'ancienne Caimacanie Druse.

Fuad Pacha annonce que déjà cet individu a été privé de son emploi et que ses antécédents seront soumis à une enquête.

Lord Dufferin présente divers documents émanés du Comité de Secours Anglo-Américain dans lesquels les besoins les plus pressants des Chrétiens sont indiqués à la Commission.

Cette communication est suivie d'une conversation générale à laquelle prennent part tous les Commissaires, et qui porte à la fois sur l'évaluation approximative des dommages soufferts par les Chrétiens tant à Damas que dans le Liban, sur les divers moyens dont le Gouvernement pourrait user pour se procurer des fonds, et sur la nature du concours que les Commissaires seraient en mesure de lui prêter.

La conclusion de cet entretien est que sans une somme considérable et immédiatement disponible, il est de toute impossibilité de prendre en faveur des Chrétiens les mesures indiquées par les circonstances et rendues urgentes par l'approche de l'hiver.

Fuad Pacha exprime le désir que cette conclusion soit soumise par les Commissaires à leurs Gouvernements respectifs. Quant à lui il s'engage à présenter dans une prochaine séance un aperçu des ressources de la province ainsi que des dépenses auxquelles il s'agit de faire face.

La question des indemnités est mise à l'ordre du jour, et la séance est levée à cinq heures et demie.

(Suivent les signatures.)

Annexe.

Note des Sommes distribuées aux Chrétiens victimes des derniers événements.

	Piastres.
Payé, dans le mois d'Août, aux réfugiés de Damas dont le nombre était de 5,536.	323,015
Payé, dans le mois d'Août, aux réfugiés de Deir-el-Kamar, Hasbeya, et Rasheya, dont le nombre était de 4,944	157,667
Moyenne des frais divers, y compris la dépense de l'Hospice Impérial, contenant de 1,200 à 2,000 personnes	209,251
Moyenne des sommes données aux Chrétiens de Damas	600,000
Total	1,289,933

Inclosure 13 in No. 240.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrouth, November 3, 1860.

I WOULD venture to point out to your Excellency's attention a slight incident which occurred at the last sitting of the Commission. We were occupied in discussing the various methods for housing the Christians before winter, when M. Bécclard, the Representative of France, took occasion to propose that the villages which had been deserted by the Druses should be consecrated to the service of the refugees.

If this proposition had been made in the simple interests of charity, it might be considered not only unobjectionable, but a very excellent expedient. I cannot, however, help fearing—and it is on this account I signalize the circumstance to your Excellency—that the French having been baffled in their attempts to drive the Druses from the Mountain at the point of the bayonet, or to frighten them from their homes through the instrumentality of the Christians, have determined to appropriate their villages on the plea of necessity and retributive justice.

In this idea I am confirmed by the fact of the Russian Representative having immediately endeavoured to outbid M. Bécclard, by a proposal, that even where a Druse village was occupied by its legitimate owners, the one half of the population should be required to double-in with the other half, in order that the Christians might be installed in the houses left vacant by the process.

Though open to considerable objection, I preferred to allow these propositions to be defeated by the difficulties in the way of their execution, rather than make them a subject of dispute between myself and my colleagues. But this example will enable your Excellency to understand how delicate is the task I have to perform, and how speciously the plea of humanity can be made to assist the accomplishment of a political purpose.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

No. 241.

Consul-General Colquhoun to Lord J. Russell.—(Received November 21.)

(No. 149.)

Alexandria, November 7, 1860.

My Lord,

I RECEIVED, a few days ago, a letter from Mr. Cyril Graham, attached to Lord Dufferin's Mission in Syria, of which I annex an extract.

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Having learnt that the Viceroy had returned to Cairo, I went up there on the 31st October, and saw His Highness the following day. I communicated to him the object of my visit, and told him that I was quite aware of what he had already done here on behalf of the numberless refugees with whom, a few months ago, Egypt was inundated—how generously he had acted; but I said that it was specially at Lord Dufferin's desire that I now ventured to appeal to him.

I was rather surprised at the coldness with which he, at first, received my request; after a little reflection he said, "Mr. Colquhoun, all my actions with regard to Syria have been so wilfully misinterpreted, that I am unwilling to give further hold to my enemies. Were I to send food and clothing to Syria, it would be immediately represented at Constantinople, that I was endeavouring to create for myself a party in that country."

I said I was happy to find that there was no unwillingness on the part of His Highness to help these unfortunates; that I would venture to take on myself the responsibility of assuring him that no malicious insinuation as to his motives should have any weight with the Porte; that I would inform Her Majesty's Ambassador of the facts as they had occurred; that His Highness had been induced to come forward at the pressing request of Lord Dufferin and myself, and that I trusted that, so far from blame being attributed to him, he would receive the expression of the satisfaction of the Ottoman Government at his having so generously come forward to render assistance to one of its suffering Provinces.

His Highness accordingly assured me that if I would take the trouble of representing the case in its proper light, he would with pleasure come forward with such means as he had disposable. I thanked His Highness, and returned on the 3rd to Alexandria.

I shall, by next mail, inform his Excellency Sir Henry Bulwer of the above, and shall urge him to lose no time in making the Porte aware of the true state of things, and shall suggest that it would be an act agreeable to the Viceroy that the Porte should acknowledge the Pasha's kindness and real motives.

I shall also write to his Excellency König Bey, the "Secrétaire des Commandemens" of His Highness, requesting him to inform Said Pasha of my having fulfilled the promise made to him of writing to Sir Henry Bulwer, and inclosing a list of certain articles of food and clothing which I hope His Highness will, without loss of time, forward to Beyrout.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ROBERT G. COLQUHOUN.

Inclosure in No. 241.

Mr. Graham to Consul-General Colquhoun.

(Extract.)

Beyrout, October 26, 1860.

HE (Lord Dufferin) especially wishes me to talk with you about one subject, which I will now bring before you. Do not you think that Said Pasha might be induced to do something for the Christians of Syria? Lord Dufferin says he would be so extremely obliged to you if you would see his Highness, and tell him of the miserable condition of the native Christians, and how impossible it will be for them ever to survive unless great exertions be made for their support; hitherto we have had fine weather, but soon winter will come on, and then I do not know what we are to do. The Pasha of Egypt might do much, not only in contributing funds, but by sending grain, rice, and other articles for daily consumption. His Highness is personally acquainted with Lord Dufferin, and if you mention to him that his Lordship is now Her Majesty's Commissioner in this country, he might be, perhaps, more readily induced to show his goodwill and give his aid to the poor creatures who, unless they are well supplied, must perish in great numbers. We also want as much even as food, covering, bedding, and such things. We cannot even, with all the industry of Beyrout, work nearly fast enough to supply the pressing demand for night-coverings. Could not much be done in Egypt? If a

large present of "lehafs" (wadded coverlids) were sent, nothing could be more welcome. Could you find out for me, and let me know by next mail, at what price "lehafs" could be furnished in Alexandria, and at what rate they could be made? I am sure the Committee would gladly order some, and I will take upon myself to order at once 100*l.* worth of them to be sent as soon as possible, and packed up and addressed to me, care of Her Britannic Majesty's Consulate; with this reserve, however, that if the freight be a great item it would be money thrown away: but, perhaps, some arrangement might be made with the Steam Company in consideration of the cause for which they are wanted, &c.

No. 242.

Acting Consul Wrench to Lord J. Russell.—(Received November 21.)

(No. 36.)

Damascus, November 5, 1860.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose to your Lordship copy of my despatch of this day's date to Her Majesty's Ambassador at the Porte, reporting on late occurrences in this Pashalic.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WILLIAM H. WRENCH.

Inclosure in No. 242.

Acting Consul Wrench to Sir H. Bulwer.

Damascus, November 5, 1860.

Sir,

SINCE I had the honour to address your Excellency on the 20th ultimo, the Christians have daily continued to leave Damascus for Beyrout. The fact of a Custom-house officer having been deliberately shot at his post, just outside the gate of the city, together with the sudden departure of the Greek Consular Agent, who had previously alarmed the Christians by his advice to those under his protection, have tended much to confirm the idea of insecurity already entertained by the people. I have endeavoured to restrain this universal flight, as also have most of the European Consuls here, but I fear it has been to little purpose. His Excellency Fuad Pasha some days ago issued a proclamation assuring the Christians of safety, and yesterday a second was read to the same effect, but which also announced that orders had been forwarded to the Vali of Damascus to prevent the Christians leaving without a teskeré from the Government. This order has been put into force.

Ibrahim Karami, after having undergone an examination here, the result of which is unknown, has been sent to Beyrout. His luggage on examination, by order of his Excellency Fuad Pasha, was found to contain a large sum of money, amounting it is said to about 130,000 piastres (upwards of 1,000*l.*).

Mahomed Said Bey, a Khoord, formerly Colonel in the Annieh Irregular Horse, together with the Divan Efendi of the late Mushir, and several other prisoners, have left under guard for Beyrout; but, as their trials were conducted privately, I regret that I cannot yet report to your Excellency the sentences and destinations of the prisoners.

The authorities have commenced to disarm the population of Damascus. A notice was issued that all arms were to be brought by their possessors to a place appointed, and that a fine and six months' imprisonment would be inflicted on those who did not comply. As yet, however, the arms given up bear but a small proportion to those really possessed by the people, and the Mushir has informed me that he shall be obliged to resort to more stringent measures to secure the end desired.

The Christian portions of the towns of Hasbeya and Rasheya, and of the villages in this Pashalic which were destroyed during the late

disturbances, have not yet been rebuilt; but as measures are being taken by Major Fraser, in conjunction with Lord Dufferin, it may be anticipated that the greater part of the work will be accomplished before the severe weather sets in.

Mustapha Pasha, late Commander of the troops in the Hauran, was a few days ago placed under arrest. As reported to your Excellency in Mr. Brant's despatch of the 30th June last, Mustapha Pasha was ordered by the late Mushir to proceed to Hasbeya on the attack of that town by the Druses. It is supposed that his arrest is in consequence of his neglect of this order.

It is currently reported that Shirwaneh Efendi, the Mufti who accompanied his Excellency Fuad Pasha from Constantinople, is temporarily to replace Mohammed Pasha as Vali. The change would be considered beneficial, as the present Vali does nothing. All the European Consuls complain of his Excellency's neglect of his duties.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WILLIAM H. WRENCH.

No. 243.

Consul Brant to Lord J. Russell.—(Received November 21.)

My Lord,

Beyrout, November 8, 1860.

Mr. CONSUL-GENERAL MOORE delivered me yesterday your Lordship's despatch No. 9, inclosing Sir Moses Montefiore's letter, with the Memorial from the Rabbins and Elders of the Jews of Damascus dated 23rd September. There has been undoubtedly shameful misconduct on the part of the Christians in accusing Jews of complicity in the murders and plundering of Christians. The chief Rabbi called my attention to the case of five Jews detained in prison for several weeks on such an accusation; one of whom died in consequence. This occurred in the absence of Fuad Pasha, and the Turkish authorities refused to release them without his Excellency's permission, which could not be obtained as he was moving from place to place on the Lebanon, and no one could tell where to find him. His Excellency, however, arrived unexpectedly at Damascus; and on my visit to compliment him I called his attention to the subject of the Jews, and he promised to have the evidence of the witnesses before the Extraordinary Tribunal revised, and to see that no injustice were done; and in a few days all the detained Jews were released. The chief Rabbi, when he first told me of the affair, said that he had offered to depose that one of the accused was in his house during the whole time the massacres continued: his testimony was refused; and a Christian, who claimed to be the authorised agent of Fuad Pasha, said that further testimony was useless, and the man had been on clear evidence condemned to death. This Christian, by name Ibrahim Karami, has since been deprived of his employment and sent into exile for the abuse of the authority he had usurped, and for extorting bribes on the representations of the Turkish authorities, as well as of the French Consul and myself, of his misdeeds to Fuad Pasha.

The case of the Farchis, mentioned in the Memorial, I heard of at the time; but as they were French protégés, I did not interfere,—they were soon released.

No Jew under British protection has been molested; and no one has signed the Memorial.

On my visit to Fuad Pasha alluded to, he related to me an instance of two Christians who went to a Jew's house and demanded 1,500 Turkish piastres under the threat of denouncing the owner as a murderer, and 400 Turkish piastres were actually given. I think it not improbable that other similar instances may have occurred, but I have no knowledge of more.

Soon after Fuad Pasha's first visit to Damascus, I was talking in presence of the French Consul of the means of discovering where Ahmed Pasha might have concealed his plunder, when M. Outrey said that the

Pasha was reported to have deposited a great deal with a rich Jew named Jacob Levy, an English-protected subject, who had given Ahmed Pasha bills Constantinople; and the French Consul thought that his house should be searched and his books examined. I thought the suspicion cast on a respectable man not a friendly act. I observed to Fuad Pasha that I did not believe the report; that such accusations against rich Jews were common in all countries and ages, and ought not to be lightly entertained. I remarked to his Excellency the Jews were influential with all the Governments of Europe from their wealth, and, independently of the injustice of making them the innocent victims of the malicious, it was impolitic to accuse them falsely, as such conduct would bring great odium on the Sultan's Government, and danger likewise, for the Jews would find defenders in all the nations of Europe.

I told the individual the suspicion: he replied that for twenty years he had had no bill transactions with Constantinople, that he had never had any pecuniary dealings with Ahmed Pasha, except with respect to lending money to the Treasury, and that he had no objection to submit to my inspection all his books. I wrote to Fuad Pasha stating this reply, begging his Excellency to dismiss such an unfounded and dangerous accusation, which had not a shadow of probability, further than the civility shown to Jacob Levy by Ahmed Pasha, on account of loans made to the Treasury in a time of great need. I heard no more of the matter.

Accusations of the same nature were as often threatened against Mussulmans as against Jews by Christians, and both paid money rather than be thrown into prison, with the uncertainty when they might be released. Fuad Pasha complained that the prisons were full of persons against whom nobody appeared to substantiate the charges on which they had been arrested. I observed that the fault lay with the authorities, and the inconvenience would be easily obviated by taking a bond from an accuser that within a certain time he should substantiate the charge or forfeit his bond. His Excellency replied that he had proposed something of that nature to the Council.

I shall, with Lord Dufferin's permission, state to Fuad Pasha the feelings of Her Majesty's Government on this subject, and request an order from his Excellency to the authorities of Damascus to afford an equal decree of protection to Jew and Christian.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JAS. BRANT.

No. 244.

Lord J. Russell to Sir H. Bulwer.

(No. 657.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, November 22, 1860.

I HAVE stated to Lord Dufferin that his despatch No. 40 of the 3rd instant to your Excellency, proposing a scheme for the settlement of Syria, does credit to his judgment and sagacity, and I have authorized his Lordship, when the proper time comes, to propose to the Commission the plan of which he has given a sketch.

I have, however, to instruct your Excellency to tell the Grand Vizier that no plan of pacification for Syria will be effectual so long as the Pashalic is sold to the highest bidder in the manner which Lord Dufferin so well describes.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

Lord J. Russell to Lord Dufferin.

(No. 28.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, November 22, 1860.

I HAVE received your Lordship's despatch No. 21 of the 4th instant, transmitting to me a copy of your despatch No. 40 of the 3rd instant to Sir Henry Bulwer, in which you propose a scheme for the settlement of Syria, and I have to state to your Lordship that this paper does credit to your judgment and sagacity.

You are authorized, when the proper time comes, to propose to the Commission the plan of which you have given a sketch.

I have instructed Sir Henry Bulwer to tell the Grand Vizier that no plan of pacification for Syria will be effectual so long as the Pashalic is sold to the highest bidder in the manner you so well describe.

I am, &c.

(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

Lord Dufferin to Lord J. Russell.—(Received November 23.)

(No. 22.)

My Lord,

Beyrout, November 8, 1860.

IN acknowledging the receipt of your Lordship's despatch No. 18 of the 20th ultimo, I have the honour to state that General de Beaufort has seen the necessity of taking measures to put a stop to the excesses committed by the Christian followers of his army. There is reason to hope they will not be repeated.

I have, &c.

(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Lord Dufferin to Lord J. Russell.—(Received November 23.)

(No. 23.)

My Lord,

Beyrout, November 8, 1860.

IN acknowledging the receipt of your Lordship's despatch No. 19 of the 25th ultimo, I need not say how greatly I have been relieved to find that your Lordship does not disapprove of the step I hazarded with the view of enabling Fuad Pasha to make such arrangements as would allow him to continue, during the interim which was to elapse before remittances could arrive from Constantinople, their daily supplies of food to the refugees at Beyrout.

In reference, however, to the paragraph in which your Lordship says that Her Majesty's Government cannot relieve me from the pecuniary obligation I have incurred, I would beg permission to state that I never for one moment ventured to entertain the slightest expectation they would do so.

In fact, I always regarded the affair as one of a private nature, entered into by me, not in my capacity of Her Majesty's Commissioner, but rather as a member of the Anglo-American Relief Committee; and if I permitted myself to make such a matter the subject of an official despatch, it was with the desire that, should any unforeseen accident lead to my part in the operation becoming known, or inaccurately reported, a record should remain in your Lordship's hands of the exact nature of the transaction, of the degree in which I was connected with it, and of the motive which induced me to engage in it.

I have, &c.

(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Lord Dufferin to Lord J. Russell.—(Received December 3.)

(No. 25.)

My Lord,

Beyrout, November 9, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Lordship's information, copies of further despatches which I have this day addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at the Porte.

I have, &c.

(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 248.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, November 9, 1860.

WITH reference to my despatch of the 3rd instant, I would beg to state that, in alluding to the unpaid condition of the Turkish troops, I intended my observations to apply to the army of Arabistân.

The regiments which have lately arrived from Constantinople were paid up, I believe, before quitting the capital.

I may, however, take this opportunity of mentioning that Fuad Pasha confided to me that it was only by diverting to the benefit of the Christians the moneys sent to him for the payment of his soldiers that he had been enabled to render them any assistance at all. His late remittance of 25,000*l.* sterling from the Porte is already nearly spent; and although another 25,000*l.* may be shortly expected, it will prove but barely sufficient to carry him through a couple of months more.

The inadequacy of such supplies to the exigencies of the occasion will be at once understood, when I mention that the expenses of the Anglo-American Relief Committee alone have mounted up to 2,000*l.* a-week.

In addition to the ordinary expenses of Government, Fuad Pasha has to sustain the whole of the Christian portion of the Damascene population, as well as to roof in the villages of the Lebanon.

I have, &c.

(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 2 in No. 248.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, October 9, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that, during a conversation I had yesterday with the French General, he stated to me his opinion that the only arrangement compatible with the future tranquillity of Syria would consist in the whole of the Lebanon being under the domination of a native Christian Governor, appointed, for form's sake, by the Pasha of the Province.

This scheme would include, if I rightly understood M. de Beaufort, the suppression of Turkish authority at the ports of Sidon, Beyrout, and Tripoli. The Lebanon would then become, to use his own expression, "a fortress to which the Christians of all Syria might flee."

Respecting the government of the remainder of the Province, the French General seemed to be undecided, and almost unconcerned. The idea of investing Abd-el-Kader with a certain amount of authority at Damascus has evidently occurred to him, though he evinced no great eagerness in alluding to the idea. He even appeared ready to substitute the name of Fuad Pasha for that of the Emir.

How far M. de Beaufort is to be regarded as an exponent of the intentions of the French Government is another question. He is in communication with M. Thouvenel and the Minister of War, and evidently arrived

in the country under the impression that its settlement was to be effected under his sole auspices. The institution of the Commission was probably a disappointment to him. He is even disposed to speak with some disparagement of its labours, so that it is possible his opinions may differ to a certain extent from those of M. Bécarré, whom he regards, perhaps, with a little jealousy.

From expressions which have dropped from this latter gentleman, I am inclined to think that, although at first fully determined to press the appointment of a native Prince to the whole Lebanon, further inquiry has rendered him sensible of the extreme difficulty there would be in finding among the Maronites any individual of sufficient pre-eminence, talent, and integrity, to undertake so troublesome a charge.

It is also possible he may have become aware of the aversion with which the Greek community would regard such an arrangement. In a few days I hope to be able to write to your Excellency more fully on this subject. In the meantime I am disposed to think that, provided only the Lebanon were rendered independent, the French would consider their influence over the remainder of the Province so completely assured as to render its mode of government a matter of complete indifference to them.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

No. 249.

Lord J. Russell to Lord Dufferin.

(No. 30.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, November 23, 1860.

I HAVE to state to your Lordship that Her Majesty's Government approve of the course which you followed at the fifth sitting of the Syrian Commission, as reported in your despatch of the 31st of October to Sir Henry Bulwer, of which a copy was inclosed in your despatch to me No. 21 of the 4th instant.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 250.

Sir H. Bulwer to Lord J. Russell.—(Received November 26.)

(No. 743.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, November 12, 1860.

WITH reference to your Lordship's despatch No. 570 of the 25th ultimo I have already informed you in my No. 693 of the 26th ultimo that I called the attention of the Porte to the complaints of the Jewish population at Damascus, and received the communication that due orders should be given to Fuad Pasha on the subject. I will, moreover, see the new Pasha who is named as Governor, and talk to him myself thereupon.

What appears to me the state of the case generally is, that great excitement prevailing at Damascus, and a strong thirst for vengeance, charges are brought by the Christians, not unnaturally, in an exaggerated and sometimes unjust shape, both against Turks and Jews; and as the general feeling amongst the Representatives of the Christian Powers is also very naturally to listen to the Christians, and to support their representations, the officers of the Turkish Government are placed in a very difficult position, both as to Jews and Turks. The Jews address themselves to Sir M. Montefiore, and other persons who can interest foreign Governments in their favour. The Turks address themselves to their own Government. The Jews seem to require that there should be one tribunal for themselves, and one for the Turks; one law for them, and one for others; that Christian testimony against the Jews should not be believed. How can the Turkish Government in such case take perhaps the same testimony against the Turks? The only possible way of acting justly is

to calm the irritated feeling that exists as much as possible; to order the Consuls to be circumspect in supporting clamour against Jew or Turk unjustly or without due evidence, let it concern the one or the other. The charge against the Jews now is, I understand, not of having taken any direct part in the massacres, but of having indirectly connived at them; sometimes purchasing, sometimes taking care of, plundered property. I have little doubt that these charges are very frequently unfounded, and that others against Turks, of the same nature, in a great degree are also unfounded.

It is in the nature of things it should be so, and the only real and proper remedy is to produce a more temperate state of mind, and relieve justice from the character of persecution. I have said this from the first, and I repeat it now. But it is quite clear that if we urge the formation of particular tribunals, adopt particular modes of taking evidence, and of acting upon it, no Turkish Governor can reject the same evidence that he takes in regard to the punishment of a Turk in respect to the punishment of a Jew.

I make these observations to your Lordship because I think all extremes are to be avoided, and all inequality guarded against. But as the Jew is equally detested by the Christian, and despised by the Turk, and whilst attacked by the first is not likely to be protected by the latter, as one of his own faith will be, and as I believe, myself, the Jews are in general a most inoffensive body in this country, I have spoken and continue to speak in the strongest manner in their behalf, and shall give to Aali Pasha a translated copy of your despatch to Mr. Brant.

It is not altogether unworthy of remark that the Mussulmans do not seem to have joined in the persecution of the Jews, but to have come forward frequently in their defence, which is creditable to them.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY L. BULWER.

No. 251.

Lord Dufferin to Lord J. Russell.—(Received November 30.)

(No. 26. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Beyrout, November 16, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Lordship's despatch No. 22 of the 30th ultimo, Confidential, inclosing a despatch from Her Majesty's Minister at Berlin, reporting the substance of a conversation which he had held with Baron Schleinitz; and I have the honour to state, in reply, that although the manifest hostility evinced by my Prussian colleague, M. de Rehfues, to Turkish institutions generally, rendered me averse to entering into any very confidential communications with him on matters connected with the affairs of Syria, our private relations have always been on a very agreeable footing, and I have now the pleasure of transmitting to your Lordship copy of a despatch which I have addressed to his Excellency Sir Henry Bulwer of this day's date, containing an account of a conversation I have had with my Prussian colleague, by which your Lordship will perceive that a very satisfactory understanding has been established between us.

I am even disposed to consider it my own fault that such a result should have been so long delayed, and I am glad to have this opportunity of stating that, as far as I have observed, M. de Rehfues has evinced a conscientious desire to act with impartiality in the Commission.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure in No. 251.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, November 16, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that yesterday I called upon my Prussian colleague, M. de Rehfues, and stated to him that having received an intimation from home that it was the desire of our respective Governments we should communicate our ideas to one another without reserve, I was very anxious to avail myself of the resources of his greater experience, now that the time had come for discussing the future organization of the Lebanon.

Up to this time I had somewhat abstained from any very confidential communications to M. de Rehfues on the subject of our mission, as he seemed to me to entertain feelings of greater hostility to Turkey than were compatible with what I believed to be the sentiments of Her Majesty's Government.

The conversation thus inaugurated, gradually assumed a very friendly tone. M. de Rehfues having expressed an opinion very favourable to the idea of an independent Christian Principality, I replied that I thought the proposition might certainly deserve consideration, but that I feared it would be impossible to find any native capable of organizing a satisfactory administration.

To the justice of this remark my Prussian colleague seemed disposed to assent, and stated that the sole remedy which had occurred to him (only it was so impracticable he had not liked to mention it to any one), was the establishment of a permanent Commission in the Lebanon to control whatever Government might be established. Under such circumstances even the rule of a Pasha would be tolerable. Taking advantage of this casual admission, I remarked that I was far from thinking his idea a bad one; that, on the contrary, with certain modifications the principle it involved seemed to me capable of being developed into a very respectable arrangement, and that so far from considering it inadmissible, I thought his only error lay in wishing to confine its application to the Mountain. Would it not be a pity to exclude the Christian populations of the Anti-Lebanon, of Damascus, Antioch, Aleppo, from the benefits of any contrivance we might discover capable of affording a guarantee for their future security. It was true, under these circumstances, the administration must be conducted through the intervention of a Turkish Governor; but acting under the supervision of European political Agents, as M. de Rehfues himself had implied, it was probable we could count upon his good behaviour.

I then proceeded to expatiate on the hatred and jealousy existing between the Greeks and Maronites, on the difficulty of reconciling the one to the domination of the other, and on the still greater difficulty of creating for each a distinct political existence. If then, as is evident, the interests of Russia and of France are thus brought into direct antagonism, it will be the duty of Prussia, Austria, and England to act as mediators, and endeavour to discover a means of satisfying their conflicting interests. His plan I considered possessed the great advantage of conducting us to this result, by making the Turk, who after all was the most convenient representative of sovereign authority in this country, capable of governing in a manner more or less satisfactory to Europe.

The conversation ended by M. de Rehfues thanking me for having encouraged him to develop an idea which till now he had scarcely dared to hazard, at the same time that he expressed his satisfaction at the thoughts of Prussia and England being able to act in concert.

This evening I have again had a few moments' conversation with M. de Rehfues, during the course of which he stated that the more he thought over the matter, the more convinced he became of the expediency of including the whole of Syria in the arrangement we had discussed on a previous occasion. Without descending into details, I was careful to take this opportunity of suggesting to my colleague that it would be advisable in the application of his idea to deprive it as much as possible of

all unusual characteristics, and that it might be found convenient to substitute for so startling an institution as a permanent Commission some means of control more in accordance with diplomatic usages.

Although perhaps M. de Rehfues himself would find it difficult to recognize in the political Agents—who in the natural course of things would be accredited by the Five Powers to the Divan of the new Turkish Governor-General of Syria (should such a personage be ever called into existence)—the realization of his original idea of a European Commission inspiring the Councils of a Christian Chief of the Lebanon, I have little doubt but that reflection will convince him that the one is but the application of the other in a more convenient form and over a wider jurisdiction. In the meantime he will have given in his adhesion to the principle that the continuance, under certain modifications of Turkish rule in Syria, is preferable to the creation of an independent Maronite State on its seaboard.

I have, &c.

(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

No. 252.

Lord Dufferin to Lord J. Russell.—(Received November 30.)

(No. 27.)

My Lord,

Beyrout, November 17, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Lordship's information, copies of further despatches which I have this day dispatched to Her Majesty's Ambassador at the Porte.

I have, &c.

(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 252.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, November 13, 1860.

I HAVE the honour herewith to transmit to your Excellency copy of the substance of an "interpellation" I had the honour of addressing to his Excellency Fuad Pasha, at the last sitting of the Commission, relative to the complete immunity from punishment which has, up to this moment, been enjoyed by the great bulk of the Druse nation.

I was induced to take this important step by several very grave considerations, which your Excellency will find set forth in the above-mentioned paper.

In addition, however, to the more obvious arguments submitted to my colleagues in favour of the administration of a prompt, adequate, and final measure of punishment on those who have been guilty of such atrocities, there was another circumstance which seemed to me to render it a matter of paramount necessity that the delay in the execution of such a step should not be prolonged. During the course of a conversation I had had some days previously with the French General, he had complained to me, with some vivacity, of the leniency shown by the Government to the Druses, and concluded by stating that it was his firm determination, should Fuad any longer hesitate, to take the matter into his own hands, and himself chastise them to the degree merited by their crimes. Now as your Excellency will have perceived, by the general tenour of my despatches, I have all along entertained a most vivid suspicion that the French look upon the existence of the Druses as the only stumbling-block in the way of that particular settlement of the Lebanon they most desire. It would be, therefore, a very unsafe and cruel arrangement should

those who have a direct interest in carrying matters to extremity against this unhappy people be allowed to usurp the office of executioners. Were such an opportunity afforded them it is impossible to say what might be the result. The operation of taking the guilty prisoners might be conducted with such circumstances of aggravation as to provoke the resistance of despair, and in the present temper of the French army the slightest show of opposition would lead to consequences which M. de Beaufort himself might have occasion to regret. Humanity and justice therefore alike indicated that a due measure of chastisement administered once for all by the hands of the Government was the most equitable and merciful manner of evading the difficulties of the situation.

Circumstances having thus forced upon me the ungracious duty of calling Fuad Pasha's attention to so hateful a subject, it was necessary to take that opportunity of stating, in the most explicit manner, the degree of severity with which I considered the Druses should be visited, as well as the considerations which, to my mind, considerably extenuated their moral culpability.

So great did I consider the responsibility attaching to this task, so anxious was I not to be misunderstood, that rather than trust to conveying my ideas *vis à vis*, through the medium of a language with which I am not perfectly familiar, I took the precaution of addressing my colleagues from written notes which I had prepared beforehand. From these notes the Memorandum I send your Excellency has been composed. I am extremely sorry that the delicate task of balancing the opposing considerations by which the sentence impending over this unfortunate people is to be effected, should not have been confided to one more competent to the task; but, at all events, I have the satisfaction of thinking that I have done my best, without departing from the most strict impartiality, to moderate the too passionate indignation with which some of my colleagues are disposed to regard an ignorant tribe, who having been cruelly provoked into a war by their Christian antagonists, were subsequently beguiled by their Turkish patrons into those excesses for which they are now about to pay the merited penalty. I regret to be obliged to add that on this occasion, for the first time since the meeting of the Commission, a difference of opinion was observable between my French colleague and myself. M. Bécclard's amiable nature is evidently incapable of appreciating as yet the character of the Christian populations of the Lebanon. He looks upon the Maronites as mild, inoffensive martyrs, instead of the fanatical barbarians they really are, as prone to violence and slaughter as any other tribe in their neighbourhood.

It is not, therefore, a matter of wonder that he should have been disposed to receive with some little dissatisfaction such of my observations as militated against this view.

I thought, moreover, I detected an evident unwillingness upon his part to accede to the principle which, of all others, I was most anxious to establish, viz., that after the most ample punishment had been inflicted once for all, it should be no longer competent for the Christians to keep up the mutual animosity of the two races by continuing their denunciations of particular individuals, but that the work of reconciliation should be immediately inaugurated by a general amnesty, from which, however, the most notorious offenders still at large might be excepted by name.

His Excellency Fuad Pasha, I am happy to say, seems perfectly to understand the exigencies of the situation, and, before the discussion terminated, he informed me that he had hitherto delayed laying hands on the most compromised of the Druse nation, in order to effect their capture with the greater certainty, and that he himself would proceed to the Mountain to superintend the operation. As, however, he was anxious clearly to ascertain the views of his colleagues in regard to the manner in which the Druses should be dealt with, he proposed that before his departure another sitting of the Commission should be devoted to the consideration of that important subject.

M. Bécclard asked me to allow my written notes to be appended to the Protocol. To this, however, I could not assent. I have proposed instead that it should be left to your Excellency's pleasure to communicate the substance of the "interpellation" I now transmit, and which M. Bécclard

has perused, to the Ambassadors at Constantinople, not as an official document, but as a private expression of my opinion.

I have, &c.

(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 2 in No. 252.

Substance of an Interpellation addressed by Lord Dufferin to Fuad Pasha, at the Eighth Sitting of the Syrian Commission, November 10, 1860.

LORD DUFFERIN asked permission to address an interpellation to Fuad Pasha which would be found to be not irrelevant to the demand made by M. Novikow. He regretted extremely that he should be obliged to undertake so painful a duty as that which he now felt himself called upon to discharge.

He had hoped from the assurances given to the Commission of his Excellency's desire to execute a severe and impartial justice on all implicated in the late horrible transactions, that he and his colleagues would have been spared the odium of still being compelled to invoke the punishment of the guilty. "To repeat an expression of M. Bécclard's," continued the British Commissioner, "we long ('il nous tarde') to enter upon the more gracious portion of our task, and we look forward with impatience to the day when we may be allowed to busy ourselves with the work of reconciliation and of peace. But unhappily this satisfaction cannot be allowed us until the appointed measure of chastisement shall have been inflicted. It is a mockery to talk of peace while the perpetrators of such foul deeds as those which deluged the streets of Hasbeya, Rasheya, and Deir-el-Kamar with blood remain unmolested in their homes.

"Within the limits of the Lebanon 5,000 human beings have been put to the edge of the sword, 200 villages have been burned, and not a single individual concerned in these atrocious acts has suffered for his crimes. Yet for weeks have the Sultan's troops been in undisputed occupation of the Mountain, and months have elapsed since your Excellency's arrival in the province gave promise that the day of retribution was at hand. The occasion seems, therefore, to have occurred when, in pursuance of those instructions by which we are directed to provoke the punishment of the guilty, it becomes the painful duty of the Commission most respectfully to call your Excellency's attention to the unhappy consequences entailed by this delay.

"The mistrust of the Christians, too fearfully justified by past events, and only partially dissipated by the energetic measures adopted at Damascus, is again revived; the perpetrators of these butcheries begin to look forward to an entire immunity from punishment; and an intolerable state of social anarchy and confusion is indefinitely prolonged.

"It is obviously, therefore, in the interests of humanity and of the Government of the Porte that these intestine troubles should be composed with as great a despatch as possible. Delay but keeps the wound open, and maintains between those whom circumstances have destined to live in the closest proximity, that feeling of mutual hatred and mistrust which is engendered by a sense of unsatisfied animosity on the one part, and of unexpiated guilt on the other.

"Policy and justice alike require that punishment should be inflicted with the utmost celerity, in order that the process of conciliation may be begun the sooner.

"It is under these circumstances, therefore, that I would venture to urge your Excellency to take such measures as may lead to the immediate capture and punishment of such of the Druse nation as have been concerned in the late odious transactions."

In taking upon himself, however, so dreadful a responsibility as that implied in the above requisition, the British Commissioner was anxious to guard himself against being supposed to desire the infliction of any excess of punishment as far as the bulk of the nation was concerned. For the more notorious offenders no degree of severity would be too great, but for

the wretched peasantry, who blindly followed the leadership of their chiefs, some degree of mercy might be permitted. Moreover, due regard must be had to the circumstances under which these crimes were committed, and such considerations as it may be possible to urge in mitigation of their atrocity should not be altogether disregarded.

With this view he considered strict equity would require a distinction to be drawn between the relative culpability of the three classes of criminals who stand arraigned at the bar of Europe.

Amongst these, the guilt of those Turkish magistrates and officers whose apathy or connivance intensified the horror of what it was their duty to have prevented must ever remain pre-eminent.

The second place in the hierarchy of crime may safely be reserved for the Moslems of Damascus, who in cold blood, without cause of quarrel, and before one word of defiance had passed from one side or the other, rose up and slew within the walls of the town where they had been bred together, thousands of their unoffending fellow-citizens. A somewhat broader distinction, however, separates the case of the Druses from that of their associates: in the first place the excesses they committed proceeded out of a civil war into which they were provoked by their Christian antagonists very much against their will. A year ago Lord Dufferin happened to be in the country. At that time it was in its normal state. The affair of Beit Miri had just occurred. Public attention was directed to the relations existing between the Druses and the Maronites, and a general feeling prevailed that a determination existed upon the part of the latter to drive their enemies out of the Lebanon. Now civil war is at all times an abominable crime: in this country its wickedness is aggravated by the savage manner in which it is conducted. The Druses, therefore, are undoubtedly culpable for having engaged in it at all, but to this degree their guilt is shared, and even surpassed, by their antagonists. There is a point, however, at which the criminality of the Druses assumes such terrible proportions as renders it difficult for our indignation to consider the circumstances which provoked it. Even Justice may be excused if she recoils from the effort which it must cost her to examine what plea can be put forward in palliation of such unimaginable butcheries. Nevertheless considerations of some importance must still be permitted to arrest the descending scale of her balance. It is to be remembered that this is a country of vendettas; that in the war carried on between the barbarian tribes which inhabit it, usages prevail as horrible as those which disgraced the middle ages of Europe. It is a principle received and acted upon by all alike, that when the "deen" or blood feud exists it is allowable to slay your unarmed enemy, and every male belonging to his house, wherever you may find them. In fact, beneath the full blaze of modern civilization, we find in Syria habits of thought and practices prevailing for which the only historical parallel can be found in the books of Moses. "That the Christians are not to be exempted," continues the British Commissioner, "from the number of those subject to these savage influences cannot be pretended. A mere cursory perusal of the official accounts of the murders, feuds, and wars which have deluged the Mountain with blood during the last twenty-five years proves too lamentably how little influence their religion has had in mitigating the ferocity with which the traditional customs of the country have imbued them. The cruel manner in which they have taken advantage of the first opportunity afforded them to massacre old men, women, and children, even since we ourselves have been in the country, confirms, in only too melancholy a manner, this sinister conclusion.

"Truth, therefore, requires it to be recorded that even in committing such fearful enormities as have justly called down upon their heads the indignation of the civilized world, the Druses only carried out to an excessive degree that policy of extermination with which at the commencement of the quarrel they had been threatened by their victims.

"To what degree the punishment due to crimes themselves without excuse ought to be affected by the immunity sometimes required for them on the score of immemorial usage, is another question.

"In some of the most civilized countries of Europe, customs alike hateful to philosophy and religion remain unpunishable by law and

uncensured by society; while so great is the allowance it is sometimes found necessary to make for the perversity of human nature that the soldiery of civilized States are occasionally suffered to inflict with impunity on the unoffending women of a city taken by assault, horrors equalling in brutality those committed by the Druses during the intoxication of triumph and revenge.

"Be that as it may, strict equity would seem to require that in estimating the moral guilt of these unhappy persons, the standard of European civilization is not altogether applicable. Some allowance must be made for the force of circumstances and of inveterate tradition. To what degree these considerations ought to influence his Excellency it is not for me to say.

"With him alone rests the responsibility of determining the point at which Mercy may be permitted to stay the sword of the avenger. I would merely observe that stern, speedy, impartial justice is oftentimes the most humane remedy which can be applied to troubles such as those with which we are called upon to deal, and that on this occasion such a signal example should be given as shall for ever convince these Lebanon tribes that from henceforth, neither the Sultan's Government nor Europe will permit a repetition of similar atrocities."

Lord Dufferin further remarked, in opposition to a proposal made by one of his colleagues, that it would be unsafe to allow ourselves to be guided, in the adjustment of the degree of chastisement to be exacted, by any political considerations.

"Que justice se fasse sans arriere-pensée."

Inclosure 3 in No. 252.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, November 13, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Excellency's information, copy of the Protocol of the eighth sitting of the Syrian Commission.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 4 in No. 252.

Protocol of the Eighth Meeting of the Syrian Commission, held at Beyrout, November 2, 1860.

LE Vendredi, deux Novembre, mil huit cent soixante, tous les Commissaires étant réunis à Beyrout, sous la présidence de son Excellence Fuad Pacha, la séance est ouverte à trois heures. Le procès-verbal de la séance précédente est lu et adopté.

Avant d'entrer, conformément à l'ordre du jour, dans l'examen de la question des indemnités, le Président rappelle à la Commission le désir déjà exprimé par lui que des délégués soient désignés et envoyés sur les divers points de la Montagne, afin de veiller à l'exécution des mesures prises par le Gouvernement pour la reconstruction des villages. Dans quelques localités, les habitants emploient à d'autres dépenses l'argent qui leur a été distribué. Il importe de faire cesser ou de prévenir cet état de choses. Pour la ville de Zahleh notamment, Fuad Pacha se déclare prêt à ordonner le paiement de la somme qui a été fixée, mais il réclame le concours de la Commission à l'effet de contrôler l'emploi de la dite somme.

Il est décidé d'un commun accord, que pour les délégués qui n'ont pas encore été désignés par la Commission, celle-ci s'adressera au Général de Beaufort, par l'entremise de Fuad Pacha, afin de se faire représenter, en cas de besoin, par des officiers du corps expéditionnaire Français.

Le Commissaire Prussien croit devoir présenter quelques observations

au sujet de la question traitée dans la précédente séance. Soumettre à l'Europe les exigences financières de la situation, suivant les indications du Plénipotentiaire Ottoman, lui paraît être un moyen inefficace, de l'emploi duquel résulterait une grande perte de temps. Il s'agit de se procurer des fonds, sans le moindre retard, pour satisfaire à des nécessités urgentes. Ces fonds, on peut les trouver dans le pays. Damas est une ville riche qui renferme beaucoup de capitaux; plusieurs des Chefs Druses possèdent des fortunes considérables; la ville de Saida ne doit pas non plus être épargnée. Qu'un impôt de 100,000,000 piastres soit levé sur Damas, Saida, et la Montagne Druse; que le dit impôt soit convenablement reparté entre ces trois centres de population, et le Gouvernement aura à sa disposition la somme même que le Plénipotentiaire Ottoman jugerait nécessaire, non pour indemniser toutes les pertes, mais pour atténuer les maux des Chrétiens. Cette mesure, dont il reste à déterminer le mode d'exécution, aurait aussi l'avantage de faire découvrir, suivant toute apparence, une grande partie des objets volés.

Fuad Pacha répond que la ville de Damas, ainsi qu'il en a déjà donné l'assurance, sera frappée d'une contribution extraordinaire, mais il doit attendre de Constantinople la réponse à un rapport qu'il a adressé sur ce sujet à son Gouvernement. Les biens qui appartiennent aux condamnés et qui sont séquestrés devront être employés, avec les fonds résultant de la contribution extraordinaire, à indemniser les Chrétiens; mais comme le principe de la confiscation est contraire à la régulation de l'Empire, il s'est trouvé, malgré l'étendue de ses pouvoirs, dans la nécessité de consulter son Gouvernement sur l'admission exceptionnelle de ce principe. Il attend la décision souveraine.

La difficulté, selon lui, serait de réaliser immédiatement les fonds nécessaires. Sans doute il y a des riches à Damas, mais leurs fortunes consistent en immeubles dont l'aliénation ne peut avoir lieu que lentement. Saida est une ville sans importance, à peu près dénuée de capitaux. Quant à la Montagne Druse, presque toutes les propriétés y sont concentrées entre les mains des Chefs; les habitants pour la plupart ne sont en quelque sorte que des tenanciers et ne possèdent à peu près rien. La mesure indiquée par le Commissaire Prussien serait donc difficilement applicable, et le montant de l'impôt, hors de proportion avec les ressources locales, ne pourrait être perçu que dans un long espace de temps.

Le Commissaire Français appuie la motion de M. de Rehfues. Il est d'avis que l'impôt à exiger de la ville de Damas peut être considéré comme une contribution de guerre, à percevoir dans un très court délai. Comparant Damas à une ville prise d'assaut, il ne doute pas qu'une bonne part de la contribution dont a parlé le Commissaire Prussien ne soit réunie sur le champ, si l'on emploie la contrainte. Un certain nombre d'otages, choisis parmi les habitants les plus riches et les plus influents, étant chargés, avec l'appui de la force publique, d'exécuter eux-mêmes une mesure dont ils seraient responsables, parviendraient bientôt à fournir la somme demandée. En cas d'inexécution dans le terme prescrit, les biens des otages deviendraient la propriété de l'Etat, ou plutôt des Chrétiens qu'il s'agit d'indemniser.

Les Commissaires de Grande Bretagne, de Russie, et d'Autriche prennent successivement la parole, et s'expriment dans le même sens que le préopinant. Ils sont également favorables à la proposition de M. de Rehfues, et croient qu'il est possible de la mettre en pratique. M. de Weckbecker ajoute que les villages situés aux environs de Damas devraient être compris dans la mesure dont cette ville serait l'objet.

Fuad Pacha répète que sur le principe il est d'accord avec les Commissaires; il ne diffère que sur le mode d'exécution. Les biens des principaux notables de Damas sont déjà saisis, en vertu des jugements récemment prononcés contre eux. Tous les membres de l'ancien Conseil ayant été envoyés en exil, un Comité d'Administration a été provisoirement formé, et se compose d'hommes sans influence, dont plusieurs ont rendu des services, ou sont étrangers à la ville. On ne pourrait donc pas se servir de ce Comité, ni à plus forte raison rendre responsables ceux qui en font partie. Les riches, à leur tour, pourraient être contraints à payer, mais ils se déclareraient impuissants à faire payer les autres.

Lord Dufferin dit que les Chefs de Quartier, connaissant les ressources

de chacun, seraient à même de faire contribuer chaque famille suivant ses moyens.

M. Novikow est d'avis que les Commissions actuellement employées au désarmement pourraient aussi être chargées de la perception de l'impôt extraordinaire. Il voudrait en outre que la responsabilité fût partagée entre les notables de tous les quartiers. D'accord avec M. de Rehfues, il pense que la contribution dont serait frappée la ville de Damas aurait pour effet de faire réparaître les objets volés, et notamment le produit du pillage des couvents et des églises. Il ajoute que cette découverte pourrait être facilitée par les révélations des Chefs Druses actuellement emprisonnés à Beyrouth.

Fuad Pacha renouvelle les objections de forme qu'il a déjà opposées aux divers membres de la Commission. Quant aux objets volés, dit-il, on en a déjà retrouvé un certain nombre, et plusieurs mosquées de Damas en sont remplies.

Dans l'intervalle des deux séances, il se propose de consulter quelques uns des anciens employés Chrétiens de l'administration financière de la province, afin de déterminer le mode de perception auquel il devra s'arrêter, et le résultat de ses recherches sera communiqué par lui à la Commission.

Lord Dufferin présente une motion relative à la fixation du chiffre des indemnités. Pour arriver à une juste appréciation des pertes subies par les Chrétiens, conformément au texte des instructions identiques, il propose à ses collègues d'établir un Comité Européen, pour prononcer comme arbitre dans les réclamations présentées par les Chrétiens à la Porte. Comme c'est probable que ces réclamations seront très exagérées, il pense qu'il serait dans l'intérêt du Gouvernement Turc de recourir à l'assistance d'un pareil corps. Dans les cas où les sentences rendues par lui ne contenteraient pas les intéressés il serait nécessaire que les membres composant cette Commission fussent des hommes dont l'intégrité, le discernement, et l'habitude des affaires offrissent une garantie suffisante à une décision non seulement impartiale mais intelligente. Ils devraient se livrer à ce travail le plutôt possible avant que les traces des désastres n'eussent été effacées.

Cette proposition admise en thèse général par tous les Commissaires, donne lieu à une longue discussion quant aux détails qui s'y rattachent.

Fuad Pacha expose la combinaison suivante, comme devant, selon lui, simplifier le travail d'évaluation. Un Comité, nommé par le Gouvernement, mais dont une partie des membres auraient été désignés par les Chrétiens, serait chargé d'examiner les demandes d'indemnité. Il admet en principe l'institution d'une Commission d'Arbitrage pour rendre une décision définitive, dans le cas où il y aurait un désaccord entre les membres du Comité, ou entre le Comité et le réclamant. Mais il pense qu'avant de prendre une détermination sur le mode de participation de la Commission, à la question des indemnités, on doit consulter les instructions collectives des Commissaires.

Fuad Pacha, invité par la Commission à rédiger un projet relatif au mode de fixation des indemnités, s'engage à présenter ce projet dans la Conférence suivante.

La séance est levée à cinq heures et demie.

(Suivent les signatures.)

Inclosure 5 in No. 252.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrouth, November 14, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that having observed a slight inclination on the part of M. Bédard to dissent from the views I felt it my duty to submit to my colleagues on the occasion of the last meeting of the Commission, I determined to wait upon that gentleman, in the hopes of being able to bring about a more complete coincidence in our views before the adjourned discussion on the "interpellation" I had addressed to Fuad Pasha was renewed.

I commenced the conversation by stating that it would be a great source of regret to me should any difference of opinion between M. Béclard and myself interrupt the perfect unanimity of sentiment which had hitherto prevailed between us; that not only would it be a personal satisfaction to myself to agree with him on all occasions, but that I felt convinced that it was the desire of my Government that we should act as far as possible in concert; that perhaps an apparent disaccord might vanish in the presence of mutual explanations; and that I had accordingly brought for his perusal a précis of the language I had held on the previous evening, in order to afford him an opportunity of more maturely considering the opinions I had expressed.

Nothing could have been more conciliatory than the manner in which M. Béclard met this advance upon my part; and I would wish to take this opportunity of informing your Excellency how sensible I am of my good fortune in having obtained such a person as M. Béclard for my colleague. It is impossible not to entertain the greatest respect for his judgment, intelligence, and sincerity of purpose; and I have every reason to hope that the friendly feelings which have arisen between us will long survive the discontinuance of our official relations. After reading through the paper I had presented to him, copy of which I have transmitted to your Excellency in my previous despatch of yesterday's date, M. Béclard asked me what were the motives which inspired the language I had held. To this I replied, that they were very simple ones; that he must not suppose I was actuated by any *arrière-pensée* when I brought to the notice of my colleagues the considerations which in my opinion mitigated to some extent the moral culpability of the Druses, or that I extenuated their fault with any desire hereafter to claim on their behalf the privilege of retaining their Kaimakamship over the Mixed districts. On the contrary, that it was my great desire to see these people properly punished; that it was on that account I had pressed the subject on Fuad Pasha's attention, but that having taken upon myself so hateful a responsibility, it was but natural I should use every precaution to guard myself against any misapprehension existing as to the sense in which I made the requisition; that I mistrusted the Government, who would, perhaps, consider an addition to their reputation for energy cheaply purchased by a not too nicely measured effusion of Druse blood; and that, above all things, I was profoundly convinced of the force of the considerations which might be adduced in palliation of their crimes.

I then proceeded to insist, with the greatest earnestness, on the various points in their favour which I have already submitted to your Excellency, more especially enlarging on the fact that they had been threatened with extermination by the Christians on the one hand, and stimulated to the most savage resistance by their own Government on the other.

In conclusion, I remarked to M. Béclard that it was out of our power to separate the Druses from the Maronites; that, do what we could, they were destined to live together in the close intimacy of village life; that, therefore, it was of the most vital necessity to heal these intestine troubles with as little delay as possible; and that when once the due measure of punishment shall have been exacted, it would be in the interest of humanity and justice that an amnesty should be proclaimed.

To this last premise and its conclusion M. Béclard seemed very much inclined to object; and from an observation he let drop during a subsequent part of the conversation, it is evident he considers the expulsion of the Druses from the Mountain essential to his plan for its settlement.

As the disintegration of the Mixed districts would appear to those unacquainted with the country the most obvious mode of preventing a collision between the tribes that compose them, I would wish to take this opportunity of stating to your Excellency what are the reasons which render such a process quite inapplicable to the present occasion.

In the first place, I am decidedly of opinion that, as a general rule, when you have to deal with a large population, differing in their religious opinions, but perfectly assimilated in language, manners, and habits of thought, the principle of fusion rather than that of separation is the one

to be adopted. Religious belief ought not to be converted into a geographical expression, and a wise Government would insist upon the various subject sects subordinating their polemical to their civil relations with one another. But apart from these larger considerations are others which render the deportation of the Druses from the Mountain quite impracticable. In the first place, the operation could only be effected by force, and would entail an enormous amount of hardship and suffering. Should the Druses of the Lebanon be compelled to emigrate, they would naturally join their brethren in the Hauran, and the result would be, the concentration of a numerous and warlike tribe within a district that completely commands Damascus, and the plains, which not only supply that city but the Lebanon itself with corn. The Porte, therefore, would have every right to object to an arrangement which in its consequences would extend far beyond the limits within which our task of reorganization is to be conducted. If a more limited operation is resorted to, and the Druse and Christian inhabitants are invited to aggregate themselves into distinct bodies, the one towards the North the other towards the South, in ten years' time their mutual inclination to coalesce would probably result in as intimate an intermixture as that which exists at present.

In fact, before arriving at any conclusion on this subject, three things must be clearly understood: first, that the indisposition to assimilate between the Druses and Christians is not by any means so great as that between Christians and Moslems; secondly, that their feuds are not religious but tribe wars; and thirdly, that their social interests are identical.

It is the universal opinion of every person whose experience of the country entitles him to entertain one, that, if a tolerable Government existed, and no sinister influence were allowed to engender discord between them, the Druse and Christian populations would be inclined to live in perfect harmony.

These considerations I submitted to M. Béclard, and I had the satisfaction of perceiving that they made a considerable impression upon his mind. This advantage once obtained, I proceeded to insist on the inhumanity of stimulating the animosity of the two nations, when a mutual reconciliation seemed, after all, to be the only remedy we had at our disposal; and I left with the conviction that at our next meeting M. Béclard would be prepared to admit that, when once the most guilty shall have been duly punished, a full amnesty may be safely accorded to the remainder of the nation.

Nevertheless, at the conclusion of our conversation an expression dropped from my colleague which more than confirms my opinion as to the feelings with which the French Government regards the Druse nation. "Cependant ils sont bien gênant, ces Druses," said M. Béclard; and, "when the Lebanon is erected into a Christian Principality, measures must be found to induce them to emigrate." As, however, this remark was connected with the plan which the French Commissioner intimated he was prepared to propose for the future settlement of the Lebanon, I shall have occasion to refer to it in a subsequent despatch. I will merely observe, for the present, that, although their right to govern the Mixed districts must be considered to have been forfeited by the Druses as a nation, it cannot be pretended that it consequently lapses into the hands of their Christian dependents. Such a change would only perpetuate the evils of the present system. A particular tribe having proved itself unfit to exercise an exceptional autonomy, it naturally passes into the same category as is occupied by any other subject race, and the privileges with which it had been invested revert to the Crown. The Druse Kaimakamship being abolished, the authority of the Sultan at once extends itself over the vacated jurisdiction.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE

Inclosure 6 in No. 252.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, November 15, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Excellency's information, copy of the Protocol of the ninth sitting of the Syrian Commission.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 7 in No. 252.

*Protocol of the Ninth Meeting of the Syrian Commission, held at Beyrout,
November 10, 1860.*

LE Samedi, dix Novembre, mil huit cent soixante, tous les Commissaires étant réunis à Beyrout, sous la présidence de son Excellence Fuad Pacha, la séance est ouverte à deux heures et demie.

Le procès-verbal est lu et adopté, après quelques modifications.

Le Commissaire Russe appelle l'attention de la Commission sur l'état actuel de Damas et des réfugiés Damasains. Cet état est loin d'être satisfaisant. Les mesures d'urgence décrétées en principe, telles que la levée, sur la ville de Damas, d'une contribution dont le montant serait affecté à la reconstruction des maisons Chrétiennes et au paiement d'un à-compte sur le montant des indemnités, restent en suspens. Le désarmement semble trainer en longueur, et les villages des environs qui ont pris une part active aux massacres de Damas, paraissent n'avoir pas été compris dans l'exécution de cette mesure. L'ensemble de ces faits n'est pas de nature à rétablir la confiance parmi les Chrétiens: aussi le mouvement d'émigration, loin de se ralentir, augmente-t-il chaque jour. Les efforts persévérants de son Excellence Fuad Pacha ayant échoué jusqu'ici contre cette difficulté, il est du devoir de la Commission de lui venir en aide. Mais elle ne saurait le faire utilement, ni engager sa responsabilité à cet égard, avant d'avoir vu de ses propres yeux l'état actuel des choses à Damas.

Pour toutes ces raisons, M. Novikow croit devoir renouveler une motion déjà faite par le Commissaire Français, en proposant à la Commission de se transporter pour quelques jours à Damas. Elle pourrait ainsi constater l'étendue des désastres qui ont frappé tant les nationaux étrangers que les Chrétiens indigènes. Ce voyage permettrait également à la Commission de visiter, chemin faisant, une bonne partie de la Montagne, de consulter, sur les lieux mêmes, les besoins et les vœux des populations, de réunir enfin les éléments qui lui sont nécessaires pour l'élaboration du travail relatif à la réorganisation du Liban.

Avant de statuer sur la proposition de M. Novikow, Lord Dufferin demande la permission d'adresser à son Excellence Fuad Pacha une interpellation dont le sujet se rattache à la question du voyage de la Commission à Damas. Il faut que la Commission se mette à considérer un certain sujet bien pénible, avant de pouvoir détourner son attention du Liban. Il s'agit de la punition de ceux qui se sont rendus coupables des atrocités commises à Hasbeya, Rasheya, et Deir-el-Kamar.

Il nous est pénible de penser qu'après deux mois de séjour dans ce pays, nous nous trouvons encore occupés de la partie la plus odieuse de notre tâche. Il tarde à la Commission d'entrer en possession d'un devoir plus privilégié, d'inaugurer une époque de conciliation et de paix. Mais il est inutile de songer à la conciliation, tant que des misérables, aux mains encore rouges du sang de leurs semblables, jouissent d'une immunité entière de toute punition. Pas un seul Druse coupable des massacres des Chrétiens n'a encore subi la peine de mort.

Son Excellence a expliqué ce délai par la nécessité d'assurer l'arrestation de ceux qui étaient les plus compromis; cette observation était juste, mais une hésitation plus prolongée dans l'exécution d'une punition

complète et définitive, est tellement contraire aux intérêts de la justice et de l'humanité, qu'il importe à la Commission de prier son Excellence de vouloir bien nous accorder une explication de ses intentions. Des circonstances auxquelles nous ne pouvons pas toucher, avaient destinée ces deux tribus à vivre ensemble. Ce délai, apporté à l'exécution des coupables ne fait qu'envénimer la blessure, en maintenant d'un côté une haine inassouvie, et de l'autre la conscience d'une culpabilité dont l'expiation n'est pas encore accomplie. Il est de la dernière importance que cet état ne se prolonge davantage. Mais en se chargeant d'une responsabilité si grave, où il s'agit d'une question de vie et de mort, le Commissaire Britannique ne voudrait pas être soupçonné de requérir une punition démesurée. Il désire surtout qu'on puisse poser certaines limites où la main vengeresse de la justice puisse s'arrêter. Dans cette vue, il admet une distinction entre les trois classes de criminels aujourd'hui inculpés au tribunal de la Chrétienté. De ces trois degrés de culpabilité, il faut assigner le premier rang aux officiers Turcs qui avaient prêté la main aux atrocités qu'ils auraient dû prévenir. Après ceux-ci viennent les Musulmans de Damas qui, sans querelle, sans provocation, se sont rués sur leurs concitoyens inoffensifs, et les ont passés au fil de l'épée.

Les crimes des Druses semblent entrer dans une catégorie différente. Leurs excès, quoique horribles, provenaient d'une guerre provoquée par les Chrétiens, et n'étaient que le fruit fatal des traditions de leur pays. En étudiant les rapports officiels des luttes sanglantes et meurtrières commises dans le Liban depuis vingt-cinq ans, on ne peut éviter la conviction que les préceptes de leur religion ont apporté, chez les Chrétiens, bien peu d'adoucissement à ces usages barbares; et d'après la connaissance personnelle du pays dans une époque antérieure à ces désastres, le Commissaire Britannique peut affirmer que cette politique d'extermination que les Druses ont adoptée, n'était que le développement d'un principe qu'au commencement de la querelle leurs victimes les avaient menacés de leur appliquer. Dans ces circonstances, ce serait de l'injustice de vouloir poser le type de la moralité Européenne, comme mesure de la culpabilité d'un corps de paysans ignorants qui n'ont fait qu'obéir aveuglement aux mandats de leurs Chefs. En Syrie l'espèce de guerre légitime, de l'avis de toutes ces tribus, Druse, Chrétienne et Arabe, ne peut trouver sa pareille que dans les livres de Moïse.

Il faut donc faire la part de ces circonstances traditionnelles, tout en exécutant une justice ample et sévère pour pouvoir mettre un terme à la répétition de ces crimes.

Fuad Pacha, en réponse à l'interpellation de Lord Dufferin, renouvelle d'abord l'assurance déjà donnée par lui, que la répression sera aussi rigoureuse, aussi exemplaire que pénible. En ce qui concerne particulièrement les Druses, il n'a négligé aucune des mesures que les circonstances lui indiquaient. Lors de son arrivée en Syrie, il a dû d'abord se rendre à Damas, où la situation des Chrétiens réclamait impérieusement sa présence. De retour à Beyrout, il a pu s'occuper de la Montagne dont la pacification, résultant d'un prétendu Traité entre les parties belligérantes, n'avait pas été reconnue par lui. Une Proclamation adressée aux Chefs Druses les a invités à venir rendre compte de leur conduite. Quatorze d'entr'eux ont obéi à cette invitation. D'accord avec le Commandant-en-chef du Corps Expéditionnaire Français, il s'est ensuite décidé à parcourir militairement les Districts Mixtes. Cette opération avait un double but: elle se rattachait à l'œuvre de répression, mais elle était aussi destinée à favoriser le rétablissement des Chrétiens dans leurs villages. C'eût été compromettre ce dernier résultat que d'ouvrir les hostilités directes contre le Druse. Des arrestations isolées eussent eu également pour effet de mettre en fuite la plupart des coupables, et, vu la configuration du terrain, il eût été bien difficile de former un cordon pour les cerner. Le Plénipotentiaire Ottoman a donc préféré d'une part donner tous ses soins à la réintégration des Chrétiens, et d'autre part se réserver en temps opportun la possibilité de faire saisir, simultanément sur les divers points de la Montagne, tous les individus qui lui ont été ou lui seraient dénoncés. Il allait même, sans l'interpellation de Lord Dufferin, annoncer à la Commission que les Druses ayant reparu dans leurs villages, le moment lui paraissait venu de

mettre son projet à exécution. Fuad Pacha ajoute que déjà il s'est entendu avec le Général de Beaufort, et qu'il compte se rendre personnellement dans la Montagne pour présider aux arrestations. Retenu à Beyrouth par la nécessité de pourvoir au remplacement du Commandant des troupes dans le Liban, il a dû retarder son départ de quelques jours, mais il aura bientôt le regret de se séparer momentanément de ses collègues.

Quant aux fonctionnaires civils ou militaires qui ont manqué à leurs devoirs, tels que les Commandants des garnisons de Hasbeya et de Rasheya, ils ont été fusillés. Les autorités de Deir-el-Kamar n'ont pas encore subi la peine de mort, prononcée par le Conseil de Damas, parce que leurs relations avec les Druses devaient donner lieu à une instruction supplémentaire, qui a fait ajourner leur exécution. De plus Kourchid Pacha, Vasyf Efendi, Ahmed Efendi, Tahir Pacha, et autres, sont en prison, et leur procès est à peu près terminé. Outre les quatorze Chefs Druses dont il a déjà été parlé, une soixantaine d'arrestations ont été opérées dans ces derniers temps. Cent soixante-dix individus environ se trouvent détenus à Beyrouth. Bientôt un certain nombre de jugements pourront être rendus, et le Plénipotentiaire Ottoman déploiera, à cette occasion, autant de sévérité qu'il l'a fait à Damas.

Puisque cette question a été soulevée, ajoute Fuad Pacha, il y a lieu pour la Commission de lui donner son avis sur un point important. Bien que plus de mille condamnations aient été déjà prononcées à Damas; les dénonciations et les poursuites judiciaires n'ont pas cessé encore. Il résulte de cet état de choses une défiance et un antagonisme entre Chrétiens et Musulmans, qui empêchent le retour de la sécurité; mais, avec l'appui de la force militaire, le Gouvernement peut répondre du maintien du bon ordre. Dans la Montagne la situation n'est pas la même. Si l'on parvient à y arrêter à la fois tous les individus contre lesquels il existe des dénonciations, et s'il est décidé que, dans un délai déterminé, pareilles dénonciations ne seront plus admises, on peut arriver bientôt au rétablissement de la tranquillité. C'est précisément à ce sujet qu'il croit devoir consulter ses collègues.

Le Commissaire Autrichien dit avoir compris que Lord Dufferin, dans son discours, prétendait établir une différence entre le crime de rébellion, résultant du fait de la guerre civile à laquelle auraient pris part les Maronites comme les Druses, et les atrocités commises par les Druses vainqueurs. De cette distinction même, résulte la nécessité de sévir rigoureusement contre les Druses. A ses yeux, ceux-ci ne méritent plus le nom de nation, et ont perdu le droit d'exercer une part quelconque d'autorité.

Fuad Pacha est d'avis qu'en tout cas on ne peut assimiler l'affaire du Liban à celle de Damas. A Damas, il y a eu un assassinat en grande, commis par les Musulmans contre les Chrétiens. Dans la Montagne, on doit examiner s'il y a eu guerre civile ou soulèvement des Druses contre les Chrétiens. En cas de guerre civile, il reste à se demander quels ont été les agresseurs. Les Druses ne sauraient jamais être absous des excès dont ils se sont rendus coupables; mais le fait de provocation peut constituer soit contre eux, soit en leur faveur, une circonstance aggravante ou atténuante.

Une discussion s'élève à ce propos entre les divers membres de la Commission; il est généralement reconnu que le fait de provocation est une question sans importance, et à peu près insoluble, attendu qu'on différera toujours sur la date des premiers griefs.

M. de Weckbecker pense que le seul moyen efficace de pacification consiste à rendre le Gouvernement Ottoman aussi fort que possible sur toute l'étendue de son territoire, c'est-à-dire, dans la Montagne comme ailleurs.

Les Commissaires de France, de Prusse, et de Russie croient devoir faire des réserves contre cette opinion, qui d'ailleurs touche au travail de réorganisation, et n'est pas applicable à l'objet dont on traite actuellement.

M. Bécclard, répondant au passage du discours de Lord Dufferin dans lequel il a été mentionné, dit qu'en effet ce n'est pas sans impatience qu'il attend le moment où la Commission pourra considérer comme close la phase des poursuites et des châtimens; c'est pourquoi il ne peut s'empêcher

de déplorer le peu de promptitude et d'énergie qu'on remarque aujourd'hui dans la répression. En procédant tout autrement à Damas, le Commissaire Extraordinaire de la Sublime Porte s'était attiré de justes louanges. Depuis lors son action semble ralentie. Suivant la remarque de Lord Dufferin, pas un Druse n'a encore été puni. L'enquête judiciaire ouverte à Beyrouth traîne en longueur, et a pris récemment un caractère tel qu'on ne saurait en prévoir la fin. Tout en motivant ainsi le vœu qu'il avait formulé, le Commissaire Français s'empresse de prendre acte de la communication faite par son Excellence Fuad Pacha relativement aux Druses. Puisque le temps est enfin venu de les frapper, il réclame une répression vigoureuse contre des assassins qui se sont mis hors la loi, c'est-à-dire, au ban des nations. Sur ce dernier point, il est heureux de se trouver d'accord avec le Commissaire d'Autriche. Mais il n'admet pas la distinction faite par Lord Dufferin. Les scènes de Deir-el-Kamar, pas plus que celles de Damas, ne peuvent s'appeler une guerre civile. Ce sont de véritables boucheries.

M. Novikow rappelle que des scènes semblables ont eu lieu à Rasheya et à Hasbeya. Il ne peut être question de guerre civile dans les atrocités commises par les Druses sur ces deux points. Elles n'ont eu pour cause déterminante que la soif du sang et du pillage, et les coupables doivent être classés dans la catégorie des criminels qui méritent une punition tout aussi sévère que les Musulmans de Damas. Ceux des Chrétiens de l'Anti-Liban qui ont participé aux massacres sont encore aujourd'hui en butte aux insultes des Druses.

Le Commissaire Prussien croit devoir ramener l'attention de ses collègues sur la motion présentée au début de la séance par M. Novikow. Il croit qu'en effet le meilleur moyen de rassurer les Chrétiens de Damas et de les empêcher d'émigrer, serait que la Commission se transportât momentanément au milieu d'eux. A cette occasion, M. de Rehues donne lecture de quelques fragments d'une lettre du Consul de Prusse à Damas, qui indique les causes du malaise actuel.

La motion de M. Novikow est mise en discussion, et donne lieu à un échange d'avis différents. Tous les Commissaires, sauf son Excellence Fuad Pacha et M. de Weckbecker, pensent que la présence de la Commission à Damas est nécessaire, et peut seule produire l'effet désiré; et M. Bécclard, rappelant l'objection qui lui avait été faite dans le principe, voudrait qu'avant de partir pour Damas, la Commission eût la satisfaction d'avoir obtenu quelques résultats sérieux.

Le Commissaire Français donne lecture d'une supplique adressée à la Commission, sous la date du 7 Novembre, par toutes les communautés Chrétiennes de Damas. Dans cette supplique, les Chrétiens se déclarent prêts à retourner chez eux, ainsi qu'ils en ont reçu l'ordre, mais à de certaines conditions. L'une de ces conditions consiste dans la garantie qu'ils sollicitent des Commissaires.

M. Bécclard, en achevant cette lecture, fait remarquer que le document dont il s'agit offre un caractère exceptionnel, en ce sens—qu'il émane de la totalité de la population Chrétienne, représentée par les cinq communautés des différents rites.

Fuad Pacha s'élève contre la prétention des Chrétiens de Damas d'obtenir une garantie que la Commission ne peut leur donner, et qui indique de leur part une méfiance profonde à l'égard du Gouvernement.

Le Commissaire Français fait observer que cette méfiance n'est pas sans motifs, et que le Gouvernement a beaucoup à faire pour le dissiper. La demande de garantie des Chrétiens n'est pas non plus chose nouvelle, et on ne peut s'étonner qu'ils aient placé toutes leurs espérances dans la sollicitude dont ils se savent l'objet de la part de la Commission.

Fuad Pacha répond qu'il se rend très bien compte des sentiments inspirés aux Chrétiens par leurs malheurs; mais il n'admet pas que ses actes puissent être mis en suspicion. Pour donner aux Chrétiens la confiance qui leur manque, il prendra encore, s'il le faut, de nouvelles mesures, et à cet effet il accueillera toujours avec empressement les conseils de ses collègues. En outrepassant cette limite, la Commission empiéterait sur les droits de son Gouvernement.

M. Bécclard dit qu'il ne pouvait se dispenser de faire parvenir à sa

destination la supplique des Chrétiens de Damas, et qu'il a jugé tout à la fois plus loyal et plus efficace de donner lecture de cette pièce en présence du Plénipotentiaire Ottoman.

Le Commissaire Prussien fait savoir que, d'après sa correspondance, la subvention quotidienne de cinquante paras, allouée aux Chrétiens de Damas par le Gouvernement, leur est payée irrégulièrement; ce qui constitue déjà un arriéré de vingt jours.

Fuad Pacha exprime l'étonnement que lui cause cette nouvelle, dont il n'a eu aucune connaissance, et qui lui paraît inexplicable. Il prendra des informations.

M. de Rehues insiste de nouveau sur la nécessité de statuer, relativement à la motion du Commissaire Russe. Si cette motion n'était pas adoptée, il croirait de son devoir néanmoins de faire, personnellement, le voyage de Damas.

Fuad Pacha se livre à de nouvelles critiques contre la dite motion, dont il conteste l'utilité.

Il est décidé, sur la demande de M. Bécclard, que la motion du Commissaire Russe sera remise en discussion dans la séance suivante.

Le projet du Plénipotentiaire Ottoman, consistant à fixer un délai après lequel les Chrétiens ne pourront plus présenter de dénonciations contre les Druses, est approuvé à l'unanimité.

Fuad Pacha annonce qu'il comptait communiquer à la Commission divers travaux déjà terminés, suivant l'engagement qu'il en avait pris, mais les discussions qui ont rempli cette séance ne lui ont pas permis de le faire.

Le Commissaire Français interpelle Fuad Pacha :

1. Sur l'impôt qu'on paraît vouloir exiger en ce moment des Chrétiens de Beyrouth et du Liban: laissant de côté, dit-il, la question de savoir jusqu'à quel point il est juste de mettre à exécution une seule des dispositions du Hatti-Houmayoun, M. Bécclard se demande si cette mesure est opportune.

2. Sur le retard apporté au paiement des 1,500 bourses, promises aux habitants de Zahlé, sur le montant des 9,000 qui leur ont été allouées pour frais de reconstruction.

Fuad Pacha répond, quant à la seconde question, que le paiement de 1,500 bourses avait été retardé faute de garanties, mais que ces garanties ayant été obtenues depuis lors, le paiement va avoir lieu.

Quant à l'impôt militaire, il rappelle que cet impôt a été établi en remplacement de l'ancien haratch. On ne l'exige en ce moment que des Chrétiens des localités qui n'ont pas souffert, et qui néanmoins n'ont rien payé depuis quatre ou cinq ans. Il est juste que cette ressource soit affectée au soulagement des victimes, et d'ailleurs, sur le montant de l'arriéré, on ne demande qu'une seule annuité; on se contente même d'un simple à-compte.

La séance est levée à six heures.

(Suivent les signatures.)

Inclosure 8 in No. 252.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrouth, November 15, 1860.

IN this despatch I propose to acquaint your Excellency with the outline of the arrangements which I have reason to believe will be submitted by the French Commissioner to his colleagues for the settlement of the Mountain.

His scheme may be said to consist in the erection into an independent Christian Principality of a considerable district, extending from the northern extremity of the Lebanon to the River Leontes, and including, on the west, the whole of the intermediate seaboard. The ports of Tripoli, Beyrouth, and Saida are to be recognized as integral portions of the

emancipated territory, over which no semblance of Turkish jurisdiction is to be allowed to prevail.

In the course of time, the Druse and the non-Christian element would doubtless find it convenient to withdraw from the uncongenial territory of this new State, and the Principality of the Lebanon would remain a safe and spacious asylum within which the Christians from Damascus and all other parts of Syria might retire at their pleasure.

On M. Bécclard concluding his sketch, I contented myself with observing that although some grave objections had presented themselves to my mind during the devolution of his plan, the whole question was so surrounded with difficulties, and every scheme must necessarily be so open to criticism, that the apparent obstacles in the way of its execution should be no reason for not giving it our most serious consideration, and that, therefore, I should be quite willing to discuss such a proposal with himself and my colleagues, whenever he chose. There was a question, however, which I should wish to put: Did his plan presuppose the continuance of a foreign occupation?

"Yes," replied M. Bécclard, "for a few years, certainly; but by an army of no more than 10,000 or 12,000 men, composed, if it is necessary, of contingents from various European States."

"Such an arrangement," I said, "appears rather unnatural, and I fear the European Governments will hardly be prepared to entertain any plan involving the permanent occupation of the country by a military force. Moreover," I added, "would Turkey consent to such a sacrifice? The surrender of the Lebanon and its ports is tantamount to the cession of Syria. If we are in a position to ask the one, would it not be better to extend the benefits of our intervention to the whole Province?"

With this the conversation terminated.

I will conclude this despatch by briefly recording the more obvious, and I am afraid insuperable, objections to such a plan:—

1. The Lebanon, under such circumstances, would become a mere fortress, garrisoned by the dependents of a foreign Power.

2. The cession of the three harbours by the Porte would place Damascus and Syria completely at the mercy of the Power dominant in the Lebanon.

3. The permanent occupation of the country by a large foreign force is an inadmissible arrangement.

4. It is quite impossible to find any native of sufficient intelligence, integrity, and pre-eminence, to put at the head of the new administration.

5. The Christians of the Lebanon are a savage barbarous tribe, quite incapable of governing themselves. The priesthood and the aristocracy are at this moment at daggers drawn; the peasants of some of the pure Maronite districts are in actual revolt against their feudal Chiefs; and the Kesrouan itself has been the scene of continual crime, murder, and outrage.

6. The difficulties of reconciling the Greek community to a Maronite domination will probably be found insuperable.

7. If the last objection was overcome by the pressure of present circumstances, the Turks would endeavour hereafter to upset the arrangement by putting the Greeks to the same uses they have lately put the Druses, and probably with the same sanguinary results.

8. In attempting to include the three ports, the Commissioners would be exceeding the limits which have been assigned to them by their Governments.

9. The plan, therefore, is either too extensive or too incomplete. It requires an enormous sacrifice on the part of the Porte, while it extends the benefits derived from such a concession, to but an inconsiderable portion of the Christian population of the province.

In connection with this last remark, I would desire more particularly to call your Excellency's attention to the fact that M. Bécclard, if I understood him aright, unlike the French General, does not propose to include Hasbeya and the towns of Mount Hermon within the limits of his new State. The reason of this is obvious: the inhabitants of all these places

are orthodox Greeks; consequently any extension of its territory in that direction would introduce into the already sufficiently incongruous constituency of the Lebanon an addition to the anti-Maronite element. Yet it seems hard that those villages which have suffered more than any others in the late disturbances should be altogether excluded from the benefits of European intervention.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 9 in No. 252.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, November 15, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that there is reason to believe the Russian and Greek interests in this country, foreseeing the danger which they incur of finding themselves suddenly placed under the domination of a Maronite ascendancy, have been, lately, busy in devising schemes for securing to their own community a separate and independent jurisdiction.

The difficulties they will have to encounter in the realization of such a project will probably prove very great. As yet, the happiest contrivance which has occurred to the ingenuity of their advisers seems to be the creation of a distinct Greco-Christian administration in the Anti-Lebanon.

The Greek community is the most numerous of any in Syria. The Christian population of Damascus almost entirely belongs to the Greek Church. The Christians of Hasbeya and Rasheya are also Greeks, while the towns of Tripoli and Sidon, and the districts in their neighbourhood, are largely peopled by the same sect. In the Lebanon itself, however, with the exception of certain Greek Christian villages (whose inhabitants, it is to be remarked, assisted the Druses), the population is chiefly Maronite. In order to rectify this preponderance of numbers, I am inclined to think an endeavour is being made to extemporize a Greek constituency for the Mountain.

It is well known that the Consul of the King of Greece has been encouraging the exodus from Damascus, both by precept and example; and it may be just possible that the famous chalking of doors which lately took place in that city is a fact not altogether foreign to such a policy, while the idea which has been latterly agitated of transferring the Greek population of Hasbeya from Mount Hermon to the Lebanon would be perfectly in accordance with the above presumption. Nevertheless, it is impossible to trace, with any certainty, the sinuosities of Christian intrigue in this country. I confess I can foresee nothing but failure in any attempt to constitute separate and independent religious jurisdictions over Syria.

I have already expressed to your Excellency that a union, and not a disintegration, of the population is what we ought to endeavour to accomplish. The hatred which exists between Greek and Maronite, as my Russian colleague has himself informed me, is as bitter as any between Maronite and Druse. If the Druse Kaimakamship is to be replaced by a Greek Patriarchate in the Anti-Lebanon, if such men as Bishop Tobia are to direct the Councils of the Maronites, and if it is still to remain the interest of the Turk to pit one creed against the other, we shall have effected but a small improvement on the previous arrangement.

I do not know who is the person whom M. Bécclard may have discovered to be worthy of being crowned Grand Prince of the Lebanon, but I can safely say, that among the native families not a single individual exists who is fit to be trusted with the government of a village. Fuad Pasha cannot even find a temporary Kaimakam. He talks of nominating, provisionally, one Yusuf Kerami, a person educated by the Lazarists, and possessed of some little energy; but, though supported by the French, it is probable his appointment will cause great dissatisfaction among the Maronite Sheikhs, who dread his anti-feudal tendencies and despise his

mean extraction. Yet I find, on inquiry, it is impossible to discover any one else who can pretend to compete with this man's modest qualifications. What chance, then, have we of lighting on a person capable of directing the destinies of an independent State, or even of commanding for a day the obedience of his ill-assorted subjects. To such an authority the Greek interest would never submit. If, on the other hand, it were possible to give to the Greeks a separate autonomy, there is every reason to suppose its administration would be characterized by a corresponding impotence, and the result would be, the juxtaposition of two disorderly communities, between whom it would still remain the interest of the Turk to engender the bitterest animosity. The sobering impressions caused by late events once obliterated, their dormant rivalry would again burst forth, and the Mountain must inevitably become the theatre of fresh disturbances. I have, therefore, little hesitation in saying that Turkish supremacy, under the conditions I ventured to describe in my despatch of the 4th instant, would be a preferable arrangement to this sinister duality.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 10 in No. 252.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, November 15, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that I have reason to believe M. Bécclard entertains a faint expectation that the Yusuf Kerami I mentioned in my last despatch may be worked up into a Prince of the Mountain.

This Yusuf Kerami may be looked upon as the tool of Bishop Tobia and the Maronite clergy. His appointment to the Kaimakamship will prove distasteful to the aristocratical portion of his own nation, while the extension of his jurisdiction over the members of the Greek community would be considered by the Russian interest an intolerable indignity.

From a conversation I had to-day with M. Novikow, it is very evident he dreads the consummation of such a plan as has been devised by M. Bécclard; but I am not as yet prepared to say whether, if unable to carry out his idea of an independent Greek autonomy, it would be to the domination of the Turks or to that of the Maronites he would prefer to deliver over his co-religionists. Hostile as he is to the former, I think his horror of the latter is still greater, and I am decidedly of opinion that the interests of the Greek Church would be more gravely compromised by the creation of a Maronite Principality than by such a continuation of Turkish rule in Syria as I have ventured to suggest.

In regard to the rearrangement of the Lebanon Proper, should our labours be so circumscribed, M. Novikow seems to desire the execution, on a small scale, of his more ambitious project, and it is possible he may contemplate the conversion of the Druse into a Greek Kaimakamship. At all events, it is pretty certain Russia will not behold with pleasure the undisputed ascendancy of the Maronites in the Lebanon.

Under these circumstances, I purpose to encourage the French and Russian Commissioners to urge their respective propositions. Should it become apparent that their views are irreconcilable, it might then be a not unfitting opportunity to propose the adoption of that plan which, to my mind, offers, with all its drawbacks, the least objectionable solution of the difficulty.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 11 in No. 252.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, November 17, 1860.

I HAVE the satisfaction of being able to inform your Excellency that at the tenth sitting of the Commission it was unanimously admitted by my colleagues that as soon as a due measure of punishment shall have been inflicted on the more notorious authors of the late massacres in the Mountain, an amnesty shall be accorded to the Druse nation.

M. Bécclard reserved to himself the right of hereafter recommending that, in consideration of the atrocities they had committed, the Druses should be required to suffer in their political privileges.

I replied that by an amnesty I intended nothing more than that when once the penalty shall have been paid, all judicial action against the Druses shall be discontinued, and the nation shall remain unmolested in their civil and social existence. After what has passed, it must be admitted that it will become a question as to whether they can be any longer allowed to exercise political jurisdiction over Christian subjects of the Porte.

I trust that your Excellency will not consider that I have done wrong in thus conceding the possible necessity for abolishing the Druse Kaimakamship in the Mixed districts; I could not conscientiously have done otherwise. Although I consider the Druse nation more capable of self-government than any other race in Syria; although they are undoubtedly a brave, industrious, and intelligent people, with a future still before them; although their moral guilt on the present occasion may be much extenuated; and although interested motives undoubtedly influence the conduct of France, Russia, and the Porte towards them,—yet their position is such a false one, the crimes they have committed are so atrocious, that had I even thought it right to insist on the maintenance of their independent jurisdiction, such a pretension upon my part would have only roused the indignation of all my colleagues, embarrassed my future action, and compromised that reputation for strict impartiality which I am sure it is the desire of Her Majesty's Government I should endeavour to preserve.

I have, &c.

(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 12 in No. 252.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, November 18, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that at the last sitting of the Commission, a plan originating with M. Outrey, the French Consul at Damascus, for the valuation of the losses sustained by the Christian inhabitants of that city, was submitted to our consideration by M. Bécclard.

The principle of M. Outrey's scheme consists in the distribution of all the houses of the city into different categories, according to their reputed size and splendour. Each house will then become the relative standard, according to which the loss in clothes, furniture, jewels, and other destructible property, possessed by its owner or occupier, will be estimated.

The amount of indemnification to be adjudged to the proprietor of one particular house having been ascertained, a similar sum will be apportioned to the owners or occupiers of every other house in the same category.

M. Outrey considers that 1,250,000*l.* sterling is a moderate estimate of the amount of compensation the Christians have a right to demand, and he divides the habitations of the claimants into ten categories: each of these categories he has assessed at a particular sum.

Though, of course, some injustice must attend the application of this scheme, more especially as it affects the richer citizens, yet, on the whole, the uniformity of domestic existence among persons of the same class is so exact in the East, that when once you have arrived at an accurate notion of the moveable property in the possession of one individual of a trade or of a profession, you may safely reckon that his style of living did not differ much from that of others of his craft, so that the adoption of M. Outrey's principle will possibly prove a not unsatisfactory means of assessing the amount of damages.

The only other plan would have been a specific examination of each individual claim; firstly, by a Mixed Native, and then by a European Commission. This mode of proceeding would have involved an interminable delay, and it is doubtful whether, if we take into account the disregard to truth by the Christians of this country, any greater accuracy of estimation would have been obtained.

As it is, we may now hope that within ten days the Government will have the advantage of being able to declare to the Christian inhabitants of Damascus that each individual's loss has been estimated by a process which has been approved of by a European Commission, and thus to afford them an unmistakeable assurance of their eventual compensation.

At the next sitting we are to consider how the necessary sum is to be raised. It is to be hoped, in a great degree, by a heavy tax on the Moslems of Damascus. Such a measure would be a more effectual means of punishing those wicked persons than even a further infliction of capital punishment.

The Commission having acceded to the principle of M. Outrey's plan, I proposed that before we committed ourselves to the calculations of a single individual, however intelligent or expert, it would be advisable, for our personal satisfaction, to test their accuracy by reference to other sources of information. This proposal was agreed to. On the whole, however, I have little doubt M. Outrey's estimate is pretty just. I find that it is almost exactly corroborated by the opinion of Mr. Robson.

Before concluding, I would wish to remark that an inclination was evinced by M. Novikow to insist upon the amount of the losses sustained by the Greek Ecclesiastical Establishments being determined by a separate process. No very great favour, however, was shown to this proposition. Nevertheless, it is to be remembered that the estimate submitted to our consideration was but an expression of M. Outrey's opinion.

Now it so happens, all the convents and churches in which the French are more immediately interested, such as those of the Lazarists, Capucins, and Monks of Terra Santa, fall under the protection of the Capitulation, and will therefore receive compensation through the direct intervention of the French Government; consequently it is not impossible M. Outrey may have dealt a little hardly with the native institutions of the same sort, more especially as the Maronite community of Damascus is not numerous.

In recommending, therefore, my colleagues not to pledge themselves to M. Outrey's figures without inquiry, I was anxious to give M. Novikow an opportunity of fully stating the case of his co-religionists.

I am inclined to imagine that a desire to restore confidence at Damascus, and to prevent the further emigration of members of the Greek rite to the Mountain, has perhaps in some degree prompted the invention of this expeditious mode of estimating the losses sustained by the citizens of Damascus.

I have, &c.

(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 13 in No. 252.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, November 18, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Excellency's information, copy of a Synoptic Table, drawn up by Mr. Cyril Graham, of the various schemes which have been devised for the solution of the Syrian difficulty, together with the objections which may be alleged against the adoption of each one of them.

I have, &c
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 14 in No. 252.

Synoptic Table of the various Schemes which have been proposed for the future Government of Syria and the Lebanon.

Schemes.

Objections.

1. Syria an independent province under a foreign Prince.

1. Strong opposition on the part of the Porte.

2. Disputes would necessarily arise in Europe as to the person on whom the choice should fall.

3. He must neither be of the Latin nor of the Greek Church.

4. Difficulty of finding an efficient man.

5. His army for a certain number of years must be foreign.

6. Difficulty of finding a sufficient number of Europeans well acquainted with the language and manners of the East, to fill the different posts in the administration which must, of necessity, devolve on foreigners.

2. Syria annexed to some second-rate European Power.

1. Opposition on the part of the Porte.

2. Difficulty of deciding in Europe which Power should be entrusted with such a charge.

3. Doubtful whether any Power except Spain would accept the province, and this would be obviously objectionable to us.

4. Dangerous precedent.

5. Would probably after a few years lead to fresh difficulties.

3. Syria a Vice-Royalty under a native Christian Prince, who should pay a fixed yearly tribute to the Porte.

1. Opposition at Stamboul.

2. His creed an almost insuperable difficulty.

3. Impossible to find a man at all qualified for the post.

4. Syrians not yet sufficiently advanced for self-government.

5. Perpetual intrigues which would be carried on by foreign Powers.

6. General corruption of his employés.

7. Total absence of patriotism or unity of action among his subjects.

8. Inability, without material

Schemes.

Objections.

4. Syria a Vice-Royalty under a Moslem Prince, tributary to the Porte.

(a.) Supposing the Viceroy to be a Turk.

support from without, to keep order in his province.

9. Consequent necessity of supporting him with a foreign force which would have to remain permanently in the country.

1. Some opposition at Stamboul.

2. Difficulty with regard to the organization of his army.

3. Difficulty of finding a competent man.

4. Greater difficulty of finding efficient men to work under him.

5. Danger of his becoming the agent of some great Power hostile to England.

6. The question of finance involves some difficulty.

7. The Moslems would be inclined to triumph, feeling they had got their own way.

All the foregoing objections, besides:

8. The great fanaticism of the Algerian Moslems and their hatred of the Christians.

9. Abd-el-Kader being still attached to his own country, influences might be brought to bear on him by France, which would render him—though naturally adverse to her—her agent and her slave.

5. Re-annexation to Egypt.

1. Miserable state of finances in Egypt.

2. Inefficiency of the actual Viceroy of that country.

3. Danger at all times to England of Syria and Egypt being united under one rule, while the Sovereign is Oriental—either Christian or Moslem.

5. Behaviour of Said Pasha in particular does not tend to allay this feeling of danger.

The rest of Syria remaining as heretofore under the direct government of the Porte, the Lebanon, with the ports of Tripoli and Saida, and all the seaboard lying between these ports, to be erected into a Principality—

6. Under one Maronite Kaimakam.

1. No man can be found capable of governing the Kaimakamîyeh.

2. Impossibility of maintaining order without foreign aid.

3. Monasteries and educational establishments would spring up all over the province; these would be supported by France, and tenanted and presided over by clever men carefully selected for the duty, who under cover of their profession as pastors and instructors of the people

*Schemes.**Objections.*

would secretly carry out the ambitious policy of France more effectually than any lay agents she could employ.

4. Unfair towards the Christians of the Greek rite, who would be persecuted under this arrangement, and thus the spirit of bigotry—at all times rife in the East—would be made more bitter even than it now is.

5. The Druses would be so harassed that they would either be driven again to fight, or else be compelled to evacuate the Mountain; and thus turned from their homes, they would be likely to visit on the unfortunate Christians of other parts the vengeance they would fain exercise on their Maronite tormentors.

6. The Turkish Government would lose no opportunity of fomenting discords amongst the different tribes and sects in order, if possible, to produce a repetition of the scenes of this year, and to show to Europe that the State she herself has raised was no better governed than the Lebanon had been under the Ottoman rule.

7. So in every case in the end farther intervention would be necessary.

8. If this proposal were carried out France would become mistress of Syria.

9. The Christians from all parts of Syria would from the first emigrate to the Lebanon, and thus the rest of the country would be given up to the Moslem.

7. The same arrangement being supposed, that the Maronites should have one Kaimakam and the Greeks another.

1. Difficulty as regards proper men.

2. Great influence France and Russia would obtain in the Mountain.

3. Druses would be persecuted and driven away.

4. Intrigues of Turkish Government.

5. Foreign support necessary.

6. Greek Christians in the rest of Palestine would complain how unfairly they had been dealt with, in not being included in the arrangement. Russia would support their demands.

7. The ascendancy of Russia would become each year greater in these countries—she having once established a centre of action.

8. Would be likely to cause

*Schemes.**Objections.*

8. The same things still being supposed, that the present Druse Kaimakamīyeh be transferred to the charge of a Moslem Kaimakam under the orders of the Porte, while the Maronite Kaimakamīyeh remains as before.

differences in all Asiatic Turkey, and no real benefit would accrue to the Christians by this move.

1. The Christians would almost all leave the Moslem Kaimakamīyeh.

2. This would at once give rise to fresh disputes.

3. The punishment would then fall on the sufferers from the late events, and not on those who had caused the mischief.

4. Bad effect on the minds of the Moslems.

5. The Turkish officials then would have as great a scope as before for carrying on their intrigues.

6. It would leave an open field for the intrigues of France.

(Signed) CYRIL C. GRAHAM.

Beyrout, November 18, 1860.

Inclosure 15 in No. 252.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, November 18, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Excellency's information, copies of Tables communicated to the Commission by his Excellency Fuad Pasha, which purport to give the annual revenues of the Departments of Damascus and of Saida.

Your Excellency will perceive that there is a great pretension to accuracy in these Tables, since not only have individual piastres been put down, but the compiler has even condescended to paras. On closer examination, however, many numerical errors will be detected, especially in Table 1, where the sum-total of the revenues of the Department of Damascus is laid down at 400,000 piastres more than the sum arrived at by the addition of the figures in the Table.

On the whole, there is an artificial appearance in these accounts which does not inspire me with confidence. Nevertheless, the grand total of 185,000*l.* and 125,000*l.* respectively indicated as the annual revenue of the two Departments in question may not be far from the truth. Under proper management five times this sum might be obtained.

I have, &c.

(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Tableau (1).—Revenus Annuels de la Province de Damas.

	Impôt.	Impôt pour Exemption du Service Militaire.	Devote sur les Testaments et autres.	Taxes Diverses.	Dimes.	Total.
	Piastres pa.	Piastres pa.	Piastres pa.	Piastres pa.	Piastres pa.	Piastres pa.
Part de la Ville de Damas	1,051,600 0	115,000 0	8,573 0	2,500,000 0	...	4,735,173 0
Id. de quatre Districts de Damas qui suivent—						
Merj Khéfa	410,944 16	...	...	...	261,600 0	...
Wah el Ajam	427,507 0	...	...	...	141,200 0	...
Wah Baraka	296,187 0	...	...	...	155,500 0	...
Jebel Kalamun	832,086 0	...	...	...	153,428 0	...
Augmentation des Dimes de ces quatre Districts, depuis 1,272, de 10 et de 25 pour cent	...	...	...	...	210,000 0	...
Prods des Départements et des Districts de la dite Province, dont les noms suivent—	3,074,304 16	...	...	...	942,508 0	3,965,172 16
Hama	2,327,932 9	78,750 0	...	410,000 0	3,500 0	...
Homs	521,372 0	48,750 0	...	400,000 0	17,540 0	...
Baselch	1,104,133 0	67,500 0	...	81,500 0	32,322 0	...
Ma'aret en Na'man	307,919 0	...	...	20,500 0	1,250 0	...
Ajlun	608,942 0	7,500 0	...	60,000 0	18,457 0	...
Hama	564,597 0	86,250 0	...	30,500 0	173,900 0	...
Hama	290,178 0	45,000 0	...	...	...	...
Hama	173,532 0	32,500 0	...	...	...	...
Hama	1,142,039 0	18,750 0	...	...	111,712 0	...
Hama	130,880 0	11,250 0	...	...	28,470 0	...
Hama	478,903 0	86,250 0	...	27,513 0	30,000 0	...
Hama	310,833 0	3,750 0	...	...	186,000 0	...
Hama	78,672 0	26,250 0	...	...	...	...
Total	7,722,342 9	522,500 0	...	1,122,183 0	1,774,948 0	11,154,374 9
Total given in the original	...	...	...	...	...	19,632,619 25

TOTAL.

Report	...	Piastres pa.
Affirmage du Droit sur les Moutons de l'année 1275	...	20,252,619 25
Revenus du District de Kharab de la même Province	...	650,000 0
	...	1,701,532 0
Total	...	22,604,151 25

Cette somme réduite en bourses présente	...	Bourses pstrs.
Y ajoute la somme payée par le Trésor Impérial pour les Fondations Pieuses	...	41,805 119
	...	900 0
	...	42,705 119

Perceptions en nature des susdits Districts et Départements.

	Bld.	Orgs.	Méla.	Sorte de Grain pour la Nourriture du Chameau.	Beurre.	Sain.	Mouton.
	Arb. m.	Arb. m.	Arb. m.	Arb. m.	Oues dr.	Oues dr.	Totals.
De Sanjak de—							
Hama	8,120 154	4,100 16	127 16	...	5,900 0	72 0	...
Hama	2,600 11	15,444 0	...	...	...	...	...
Hama	3,106 12	1,755 0	...	...	...	...	...
Jebel-ed-Drus	31 12	872 12	...	...	5,158 0	248 0	1,300
Hama	1,226 6	868 0	...	...	875 0	...	...
Hama	2,745 6	1,272 0	...	...	4,903 0	...	...
Adm.	699 9	1,411 21	...	447 0	...	...	...
Total	18,739 214	21,864 12	504 0	447 0	15,793 0	320 0	1,300
En Mesure de Constantinople	Kib.	Kib.	Kib.	Kib.	Batman.	Batman.	
	112,318	151,507	2,034	2,682	6,604	160	

Tableau (2).—Revenus Annuels de la Province de Saida, répartis entre les Sanjaks de Beyrout, Tripoli, Lattakiah, Nablûs, Akka, et les Kaimakamîyeh Druse et Chrétienne, d'après le Tableau suivant.

	Biens de l'Etat.	Taxes Diverses.	Dimes.	Exemption du Service Militaire.	Gabk.	Total.
	Piastres pa.	Piastres pa.	Piastres pa.	Piastres pa.	Piastres pa.	Piastres pa.
Prods du Sanjak de—						
Beyrout	1,778,310 11	997,379 0	40,987 22	275,489 31	150,908 20	...
Tripoli	1,623,449 10	167,800 0	813,112 0	127,500 0	9,215 0	...
Lattakiah	2,104,424 12	121,280 0	455,150 0	97,200 0	...	...
Nablûs	1,914,457 28	120,117 20	14,103 22	...	...	...
Akka	1,290,833 28	201,000 0	110,486 0	100,000 0	...	...
Kaimakamîyeh Druse	787,940 0	...	...	...	...	...
Chrétienne	1,051,130 0	...	...	...	...	...
Total	11,090,735 23	1,717,476 20	1,405,732 22	610,200 14	148,184 20	15,002,776 19

La dite somme réduite en bourses représente	...	Bourses pstrs.
Y ajouter les Revenus du district Shemslyeh, de l'année 1275	...	30,077 225 19
Id., id., des Districts de Haifa et Sahil Athlit, sis dans le Sanjak de Akka	...	456 164 9
	...	626 365 17
Total	...	31,154 255 5

Perceptions en nature de la Province de Saida.

	Bld.	Orgs.	Méla.	Grain pour la Nourriture du Chameau.	Séisme.	Lentille.	Beurre et Huile.	Coton de Coton.
	Kib.	Kib.	Kib.	Kib.	Kib.	Kib.	Oues dr.	Oues dr.
Sanjak de—								
Beyrout	13,102 20	43,415 19	...	...	...	...	...	...
Tripoli	8,742 8	22,684 2	3,754 18	...	...	...	...	...
Lattakiah	4,613 6	6,990 0	1,904 0	1,326 18	23 3	81 12	6,697 34	4,711 309
Nablûs	10,725 12	18,875 44	...	...	...	...	...	...
Akka	52,491 0	84,576 0	4,014 19	...	...	...	7,174 289	...

No. 253.

Lord Dufferin to Lord J. Russell.—(Received November 30.)

(No. 28. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Beyrout, November 18, 1860.

IN acknowledging the receipt of your Lordship's despatch of the 30th ultimo, I beg to express my sense of your Lordship's kindness in obtaining from His Royal Highness the General Commanding-in-chief an extension of leave for Lieutenant-Colonel Burnaby.

I need not say that the receipt of this intelligence gave me very great pleasure.

Colonel Burnaby has made himself so very useful since he has been in the country in assisting the peasantry to rebuild their villages,—his energy and expertness have done so much towards providing habitations for those who would otherwise have remained destitute of shelter, that it is no exaggeration to say many lives will have been saved through his exertions.

Of this fact there is no one more sensible than his Excellency Fuad Pasha, who only the other day expressed to me his regret that the expiration of Colonel Burnaby's leave necessitated his return to England.

With respect to that portion of your despatch in which your Lordship instructs me to make both General de Beaufort and Colonel Burnaby himself clearly understand that his presence in Syria possesses no official character whatever, I have the honour to state that, on his arrival at Beyrout, Colonel Burnaby at once informed me that he had come here merely for his own pleasure, and not in any official capacity.

Yesterday, General de Beaufort, when I mentioned the fact that Colonel Burnaby's extension of leave would enable him to continue his peaceful employment of re-roofing cottages, intimated his great satisfaction at the circumstance; and after expressing himself in terms very favourable to Colonel Burnaby, concluded by remarking what a fortunate chance it was that a mutual friend in England should have been the means of enabling him to make that officer's acquaintance.

In reply to a further observation of my own, M. de Beaufort stated that he was perfectly aware that Colonel Burnaby's visit to this country was entirely unofficial.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Major Fraser to Lord J. Russell.—(Received November 30.)

(No. 11.)

My Lord,

Damascus, November 15, 1860.

IN my report No. 9 of the 20th October, I had the honour to inclose a communication from his Excellency Fuad Pasha, received as the mail was closing, to which I then stated I should revert at a future opportunity.

The communication referred to contained a statement of the names of certain prisoners of position sent to Beyrout; the charges alleged against them; and the sentence awarded, together with sundry remarks by Fuad Pasha on the latter points.

Pre-eminent among these was the Sheikh Abdullah-el-Halibi, principal Sheikh of the great Mosque of Damascus, regarded by the Christians of this city as a principal, if not the chief, instigator of the fearful massacre to which so many of them fell victims, and who, in their estimation, ought therefore to have been one of the first criminals executed. I believe that all, or nearly all, the European agents coincided with the native Christians in this view; not that either could produce distinct evidence in Court in proof of his guilt, for a Christian dare not, and a Moslem at the instance of a Christian would not, testify against a man of the Sheikh's position. Nevertheless, a general conviction prevailed, that from the great veneration in which this man was held by all Moslems, and the powerful influence he wielded among them, a general massacre never could have been ventured upon, without his consent or connivance having been previously obtained.

Fuad Pasha has constantly complained that he could procure no evidence against the Sheikh. It is not hitherto known to what extent this has been either sought or obtained; yet I cannot but think that the Sultan's Representative, clothed with the authority and influence he undoubtedly possesses, ought to have been able to procure testimony against a man whose relations were so extensive and whose guilt was so universally credited. Where a Christian is to suffer by the evidence, there is no dearth of Mussulman witnesses in Damascus.

After having been kept in semi-confinement for upwards of two months—submitted occasionally to a desultory kind of examination, without eliciting anything of importance, as was constantly asserted—Sheikh Abdullah and his companions were suddenly condemned, during a passing visit of Fuad Pasha to Damascus, at a time when European agents were making efforts to secure the punishment of at least the Sheikh.

Fuad Pasha appears to have departed from his usual course on this occasion, and himself condemned and sentenced these persons; as he says, "J'ai cependant condamné," &c. Hitherto, he had always left that duty to the Extraordinary Tribunal, and when pressed regarding the punishment of prisoners, invariably replied that whatever sentence the Tribunal might pronounce, it would be his duty and his wish to carry out.

It has long been a general opinion here, that Fuad Pasha himself, in effect, represented the Tribunal, and that the Court condemned those alone who, after being submitted to his Excellency's preliminary examination, were by him intended to be condemned. His own treatment of the accused, in the present instance, notwithstanding, as he continues to assert, the absence of serious evidence against them, gives colour to such a supposition, and leaves room for regret that the same promptitude and summary procedure was not adopted on his first arrival here. My own opinion of his power and opportunities is such, that I feel constrained to attribute to him, with few extenuating circumstances, the blame of the inefficacious and inadequate punishment hitherto inflicted on the murderers of Damascus.

His Excellency's stumbling-blocks appear to have been his desire to avoid wounding Moslem *amour-propre*, and his too great anxiety to anticipate foreign interference by attempting hurriedly to deal with every topic demanding attention. The result has been a passing from question to question, settling none effectually, while those entered upon are brought to a species of simulative termination, which renders it difficult for any

European or other authority to reopen them hereafter. This remark especially applies to the mode in which the questions arising out of the Damascus and other massacres have been treated.

The strict secrecy maintained by the public functionaries, apparently by order of Fuad Pasha, although not himself uncommunicative, has rendered it almost impossible to obtain any information in his absence, until it has been too late for interference. His Excellency having now taken his seat in the European Commission at Beyrout, will, without doubt, be required to adopt a more systematic and effectual course of action.

In this city all arrests connected with the late massacres have ceased, and the authorities manifest a disinclination to entertain accusations occasionally made by Christians against individuals whom they recognize as having robbed them, or having been engaged in the massacre. The Local Government itself is utterly effete; the Governor Mohammed Pasha, to whose inefficiency I have repeatedly had occasion to refer, not having yet been removed, nor, so far as I am aware, has any one been definitively named as his successor. It is of the most vital consequence to this province that the authorities at Constantinople should spare no pains to find a trustworthy and active man for this post; Damascus having now, more than ever, become a centre from which influences for good or evil will spread over the greater portion of Syria.

A measure of general disarmament was announced for the city, some three weeks ago, and an attempt to carry it out has met with but scanty success. The people having become aware of the intention, secreted their valuable, and delivered their useless weapons. It is calculated that the inhabitants possess 40,000 stand of arms; 1,040 only have been surrendered, 600 of which were taken from a dealer in arms. Threats of fine and imprisonment have been held out against the recusants, but neither have yet been enforced.

The troops in the Pashalic are still cantoned in the various villages along the line from Damascus to the Haurân, whence patrols are kept up, to ensure the general tranquillity, as well as to search for plunder, or plunderers who may have sought security for themselves and their booty, taken from Damascus or Lebanon, among the more secluded villages. The Commander-in-chief still maintains his head-quarters at Damascus.

During the comparative inaction of the army, I have been employing myself, in connection with Lord Dufferin, in pushing forward the repairs of the villages of the Anti-Lebanon, burned or otherwise destroyed during the late outbreak, as well as in procuring bedding and other covering for their inhabitants, measures rendered urgent by the approach of the inclement season.

I am now proceeding to Hasbeya and Rasheya, principal outposts of the army, where there is yet much to be done to re-establish the scattered Christian inhabitants; whence I join Fuad Pasha in the Lebanon, to which point he is shortly about to proceed from Beyrout, for the purpose of making sundry arrests among the Druses.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. J. FRASER.

Lord J. Russell to Lord Dufferin.

(No. 33. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, December 1, 1860.

I HAVE to inform your Lordship that I approve of the steps which you took to place yourself on a confidential footing with your Prussian colleague M. de Rehfues, and the language you held to him on the Syrian question, as reported in your despatch to Sir H. Bulwer of the 16th ultimo,

of which you sent me a copy in your confidential report No. 26 of the 16th ultimo.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 256.

Lord J. Russell to Lord Dufferin.

(No. 34.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, December 1, 1860.

I HAVE to acquaint your Lordship that I entirely approve of the course which you took at the eighth sitting of the Syrian Commission, as reported in your despatch to Sir H. Bulwer of the 13th ultimo, and that I agree in your observations as stated in the interpellation which you addressed to Fuad Pasha with regard to the punishment of those connected with the massacres in Syria.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 257.

Lord J. Russell to Lord Dufferin.

(No. 35.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, December 1, 1860.

I HAVE to state to your Lordship that I concur in the remarks which you made to M. Bécclard with a view of producing an agreement in your views, as reported in your despatch to Sir Henry Bulwer of the 14th ultimo.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 258.

Lord J. Russell to Lord Dufferin.

(No. 36.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, December 1, 1860.

WITH reference to your despatch to Sir Henry Bulwer of the 15th ultimo, reporting the nature of the French Commissioner's scheme for the settlement of the Mountain, I have to acquaint you that M. Bécclard's plan is inadmissible.

I have to instruct you to report to me the number of Maronite and Greek Christians in the Lebanon.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 259.

Lord J. Russell to Lord Dufferin.

(No. 37.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, December 1, 1860.

WITH reference to your Lordship's despatch to Sir H. Bulwer of the 15th ultimo, respecting the projects of your French and Russian colleagues for settling the Lebanon, I have to state that I consider your plan for the settlement of that country to be by far the best.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 260.

Lord J. Russell to Lord Dufferin.

(No. 38.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, December 1, 1860.

WITH reference to your Lordship's despatch to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople of the 17th ultimo, I have to acquaint you that I approve the line you took with regard to the punishment of the Druses at the tenth sitting of the Syrian Commission.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 261.

Lord J. Russell to Lord Dufferin.

(No. 39.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, December 1, 1860.

I HAVE received a copy of your despatch of the 18th November to Sir Henry Bulwer, inclosing a copy of a Table of the several plans for settling the Syrian question, and the various objections to the adoption of each of them; and I have to state to you that the Table in question is very useful.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 262.

Lord Dufferin to Lord J. Russell.—(Received December 5.)

(No. 32. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Beyrout, November 23, 1860.

WITH reference to the complaints preferred by General de Beaufort against Fuad Pasha's supposed connivance at the escape of the Druses, alluded to in your Lordship's despatch No. 26 of the 9th instant, I would beg to state that such an accusation evinces a singular want of appreciation, on the part of the French General, of the motives which may be reasonably supposed to influence his Excellency's conduct.

It is perfectly certain that, whatever leniency political considerations may induce Fuad Pasha to exhibit towards the bulk of the Druse nation, it is the evident interest, as it has always been the desire, of the Turkish authorities to compass the ruin of their Chiefs.

What reason, then, could induce his Excellency to connive at the escape of men whom he undoubtedly looks upon in the light of obnoxious vassals, when so good an opportunity presented itself for destroying their power and confiscating their estates?

There was another motive, moreover, which notoriously influenced his Excellency. For the first time in his life he entered upon the exercise of those military functions with which he has been invested, and undertook the conduct of troops. At considerable personal inconvenience he passed, by forced marches, towards Hasbeya, and personally superintended the measures taken to surround the band of fugitives. The difficulties of the ground, his lack of accurate information, and the superior agility of the Druses, defeated his intentions; but it is not likely he would have enacted such a farce, and placed himself in a ridiculous position, had he really intended to facilitate their escape.

The fact of his having seized and placed on their trial for high treason all the principal Druse Chieftains who put themselves within his power, might also be sufficient to convince any one of the sincerity of his intentions.

That the French General should look upon all his Excellency does

with a prejudiced eye does not surprise me. M. de Beaufort came to this country with the idea that its settlement was to be the result of his own activity and intelligence. Fuad Pasha he looks upon in some sort as a rival, and even the creation of the Commission does not seem to have been very congenial to his wishes. Neither is it possible that there should be absent from his mind a secret desire that Syria might become a field for the acquirement of military distinction. All these motives naturally lead him to depreciate Fuad Pasha's exertions, and perhaps, in some degree, mar that simplicity of purpose with which he ought to engage in the restoration of harmony and order. I must add, with regret, that I cannot discover among any of my colleagues, except M. Weckbecker, that willingness to make allowance for the difficulties of Fuad Pasha's position which common justice requires.

With a precipitation but little becoming a man of business, M. Bécclard tries to drive his Excellency to levy, in eight days, an impossible tax on the town of Damascus; while M. de Rehfues loses no opportunity of assailing him with grave accusations, supported by very feeble evidence. It was only at the last sitting of the Conference that this latter gentleman stated that a caravan of camels, laden with powder and shot, had been sent from the Government stores of St. Jean d'Acre to the Druses in the Hauran. When pressed to give his authority for such an assertion, he replied that two English gentlemen had been witnesses of the fact; but, on further inquiry, it appeared that it was with the native dragoman of two British travellers that the story originated. I propose to examine still further into this circumstance.

In conclusion, I beg to state that, although many of Fuad Pasha's measures may be open to criticism, although the march of his administration may be dilatory and feeble, although it may be difficult to attribute to him the lofty patriotism and that scrupulous integrity which characterize European Statesmen, yet, if we take into consideration the ambiguity of his position as champion of his Sovereign's authority and executor of the behests of Europe, if we make allowance for the paucity of his troops, the emptiness of his Treasury, the loneliness of his situation, the imperfection of his instruments, and the extreme gravity of the crisis, it must be admitted that he has displayed an amount of intelligence, courage, temper, and sincerity of purpose, which fairly entitles him to a greater amount of sympathy and indulgence than he receives.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

No. 263.

Lord Dufferin to Lord J. Russell.—(Received December 3.)
(No. 33.)

My Lord, *Beirut, November 23, 1860.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Lordship's information, copy of a despatch of this day's date which I have addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at the Porte, inclosing a plan drawn up by M. Outrey, for the valuation and compensation of losses suffered by the Christian inhabitants of Damascus.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 263.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir, *Beirut, November 23, 1860.*

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that, at the last sitting of the Conference a discussion took place as to whether the plan proposed by M. Outrey (copy of which I have the honour to inclose) for the assess-

ment of the penal tax to be imposed on the town of Damascus, should be adopted by the Commissioners.

At a previous meeting I had already declared myself very favourable to the principle of M. Outrey's scheme, but in compliance with a suggestion I had ventured to make, it had been agreed that before we absolutely committed ourselves to the calculations of a single individual, however worthy of our confidence, it would be well to postpone our decision on the subject until we should have time to compare them with those of other gentlemen to whom we might desire to refer.

Yesterday, however, M. Bécclard so far forgot this understanding as to propose that the total amount of the proposed tax, which, according to M. Outrey's plan, was to be paid in three instalments, extending over a period of fifteen months, should be levied within a week. This operation Fuad Pasha declared to be a simple impossibility, and corroborated his statement by the opinions he had taken of some of the leading Christian merchants of Damascus.

M. Bécclard persisted and threatened a division, stating that every one knew Damascus was a rich town, and that if compelled to sell the jewels of their wives, its Moslem citizens would easily furnish the amount within the time he mentioned.

To these observations I replied by stating, that it would be unwise for us to commit ourselves prematurely to so important a decision; that I quite agreed in thinking the tax should possess a penal character, and that I was not even sure whether it might not be expedient somewhat to increase M. Outrey's total; but that we should only overreach ourselves, if our desire to exact an adequate amount of retribution led us into the adoption of measures so extreme as to become impracticable. As yet we were destitute of information.

M. Outrey must have had some good reason for selecting the method of payment by instalments in preference to a more summary process. Would it not be well to acquaint ourselves with his motives? If we were prepared to place such implicit confidence in his accuracy as to adopt almost without discussion his elaborate scheme, would it be wise capriciously to deprive it of one of its most important features, without so much as giving to its author an opportunity of explaining his motives for its insertion?

As for myself, I had come so little prepared for such a proposition, that if M. Bécclard persisted in going to a division, I should propose as an amendment, that the Commission should first place itself in direct communication with M. Outrey.

This view was supported by the Russian and the Austrian Representatives, the latter of whom stated that his Consul had informed him that it would be impossible to effect an instantaneous collection of the entire sum; and a rather warm discussion between M. de Rehfues, M. Bécclard, and Fuad Pasha, was concluded by my suggesting to M. Bécclard the inexpediency of bringing the Commission into direct collision with his Excellency on a point in which there was room for a very reasonable difference of opinion, until we should be in a position to meet his arguments by more positive data than the reputed wealth of an Oriental city.

To this proposal M. Bécclard very courteously acceded, and the question stands over for Monday next. In the meantime I have had a very long consultation with Mr. Robson, Mr. Brant, and Mr. Frej, one of the richest and most intelligent Christian merchants in Damascus, whose beautiful house has been burnt to the ground, and who certainly cannot be suspected of any undue tenderness for the Moslems.

According to M. Outrey's estimation, the damage done at Damascus can be compensated by a sum of 150,000,000 piastres, or 1,200,000*l.* Of this sum 34,000,000 piastres, or 280,000*l.*, is to be levied on the city; 700,000*l.* on the villages in the neighbourhood; and 265,000*l.* to be contributed by the Porte. With M. Outrey's estimate of damages, Mr. Frej perfectly coincides; but he is of opinion that a tax of 50 per cent. on their yearly income might be raised from its Moslem inhabitants without paralyzing the industrial energies of the city. According to a rough calculation I have made, it would appear that the tax proposed by M. Outrey would come to about 16 per cent. Since, therefore, M. Outrey's

Nombre des Maisons.	Objet de l'Indemnité.	Indemnité chaque Maison.	Totaux par Article.	Totaux Généraux.
		Piastres. £	Piastres. £	Piastres. £
250	Pour les mobiliers pillés dans les maisons Musulmanes	10,000 = 82	2,500,000 = 20,000	
100	Maisons pillées et en partie brûlées, mais qui peuvent être réparées. Pour réparation et prix du mobilier	50,000 = 250	2,000,000 = 20,000	
250	Pour construction entière et mobilier	50,000 = 250	8,750,000 = 72,915	
500	Id.	40,000 = 200	15,000,000 = 100,000	
150	Id.	100,000 = 800	15,000,000 = 122,000	
100	Id.	125,000 = 1,040	12,500,000 = 100,420	
50	Id.	150,000 = 1,250	7,500,000 = 61,000	
50	Id.	220,000 = 1,690	10,000,000 = 82,300	
50	Id.	275,000 = 2,090	13,750,000 = 114,500	
50	Id.	350,000 = 2,915	17,500,000 = 142,800	
25	Id.	450,000 = 3,750	11,250,000 = 92,710	
10	Id.	700,000 = 5,600	7,000,000 = 56,800	
5	Id.	1,000,000 = 8,200	4,000,000 = 32,665	
1,300				137,320,000 = 1,098,415
	Patriarcat Grec, bâties et mobilier	---	1,000,000 = 41,500	
	Patriarcat Melkite, bâties et mobilier	---	5,000,000 = 25,000	
	Convent de Tzetz Saint, bâties et mobilier	---	2,000,000 = 16,000	
	Enchissement des Lazaristes et des Sœurs	---	2,000,000 = 16,500	
	Eglise Syrienne et Convent	---	1,000,000 = 8,200	
	Eglise Arménienne et Convent	---	800,000 = 6,400	
	Eglise Maronite et Convent	---	750,000 = 6,000	
	Eglise des Capucins	---	150,000 = 1,200	
	Ornements de la Chapelle des Arméniens Latins	---	50,000 = 415	
	Pour indemnités extraordinaires aux Consuls et dépenses imprévues	---	7,750,000 = 64,500	
			7,750,000 = 64,500	
	Total Général			150,000,000 = 1,210,000

No. 264.

Lord Dufferin to Lord J. Russell.—(Received December 6.)

(No. 29. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Beyrout, November 23, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Lordship's information, copy of a confidential despatch, dated the 20th instant, which I have addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at the Porte respecting a conversation I have held with Count Bentivoglio, French Consul at this place.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure in No. 264.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, November 20, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that yesterday Count Bentivoglio, the French Consul at this place, mentioned to me that during the course of a circuit he has been lately making in the Mountain, he met a party of Christians on their way to Beyrout. On enquiring of their business, he was informed that they were about to appear before the Extraordinary Tribunal in order to give evidence on behalf of Said Bek Jumlat. Upon this a conversation ensued, during the course of which it would appear that the Count pressed to know whether they really thought the Druse Chief innocent, and, on receiving an answer in the negative, he exhorted them to change the favourable testimony they were prepared to advance when he met them, into evidence damnable to the prisoner.

This admission on the part of the French Consul explains a circumstance for which hitherto I have been unable to account. During the early part of Said Bek Jumlat's trial, some surprise was created by persons whom he himself had summoned into Court, stating exactly the contrary of what they might under the circumstances have been expected to assert. Since my conversation with Count Bentivoglio, I have little

doubt, although it might be difficult to prove their identity, that they were the witnesses whom he met in the Mountain.

Should my conjecture be correct, I cannot but consider Count Bentivoglio's conduct on this occasion very imprudent. It is just possible that notwithstanding his helpless condition, influences may still exist sufficiently powerful to induce even Christians to bear false witness on behalf of the fallen Chief. So little regard is paid to truth in this country, that the prospect of a very slender and remote advantage is enough to secure any amount of perjury. It is conceivable, therefore, that these persons were sincere in their admission, when they told the Count they were on their way to state that which they knew to be untrue; but be that as it may, the effect upon the native mind of a mere whisper from a Consul is known to be so forcible, so acute are the least intelligent in detecting the hidden intention of a leading question, that persons in Count Bentivoglio's position should be careful not to act in such a way as unwittingly to lay themselves open to the charge of tampering with evidence on which is to depend the life of a human being.

When the time arrives for reviewing, in conjunction with my colleagues, the *procès-verbal* of the trial of Said Bek Jumlat, I shall take care that due allowance be made for this particular feature in the case. In the meantime, I would venture to suggest to your Excellency that this communication should be considered confidential.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

No. 265.

Lord Dufferin to Lord J. Russell.—(Received December 6.)

(No. 30.)

My Lord,

Beyrout, November 23, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Lordship's information, copy of a private letter I have addressed to Mr. Gilbertson, Manager of the Ottoman Bank, relative to the financial prospects of this province, together with a copy of that gentleman's reply.

Your Lordship will perceive that Mr. Gilbertson is very hopeful in his views, and he has been good enough to inform me in private that if only Syrian finance was detached from the monetary system of the Empire, and a moderately good government established, he would have no difficulty in recommending to his directors the negotiation of such a loan as I have alluded to at a very reasonable rate of interest.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 265.

Lord Dufferin to Mr. Gilbertson.

My dear Mr. Gilbertson,

Beyrout, November 21, 1860.

I SHOULD be very much obliged by your informing me whether, in the event of the finance of Syria being in any way detached from the monetary system of the Ottoman Empire, the revenues of the province would be considered security sufficient for a loan on reasonable terms of from 3,000,000l. to 5,000,000l.

I should be happy to receive, at the same time that you are kind enough to answer this inquiry, any observations you may have to make on the commercial prospects of this country.

Believe me, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 2 in No. 265.

Mr. Gilbertson to Lord Dufferin.

My Lord,

Beyrout, November 22, 1860.

IN reply to the question proposed in your letter of the 21st instant, I beg to state that in my opinion a Syrian loan of from 3,000,000*l.* to 5,000,000*l.* might be negotiated on the security of the revenues of that province under certain conditions.

To render such a loan possible, it would I conceive be necessary that the finances and administration of Syria should be as completely independent of the Porte as are those of Egypt.

I must take it for granted that the Ruler of Syria would be a Turk, and one who had held a prominent position in the very Administration under which the faith of Europe in Turkish finance has been so severely shaken: the notorious maladministration of the three Turkish loans would, consequently, render certain guarantees essential. All would depend on the administrative programme he would put forth; on the sort of men whom he selected to carry out his measures; and on the greater or less similarity to European systems of finance and control which he would establish at the outset.

The loan must be expressly made chiefly for public works and for the development of the commerce of Syria, and such securities should be taken for its due application to those purposes as would inspire confidence in Europe. A portion of the loan might be advantageously devoted to the establishment of a strictly convertible paper-currency, which would not only add to the available resources of the State, but greatly facilitate commerce at the same time.

Under such conditions it appears to me that a loan might be contracted on favourable terms, and the importance of inspiring confidence by such measures as I have indicated above may be easily comprehended, since thereon depends mainly the price at which the loan might be negotiated, or in other words the effective capital placed at the disposal of the Government, in proportion to the amount of debt created.

That the revenues of Syria would be a sufficient security for such a loan I do not doubt; but at the same time I should state that the information I have been able to collect on that point during the last three years is so exceedingly meagre that your Lordship must take that opinion merely for what it is worth under such circumstances. Unfortunately I have none of the data with me to refer to, and I, consequently, only trust to the general impression they have left on my mind. But those revenues would require to be managed in a style very different from that hitherto adopted, and a fiscal system must be established on another basis than that generally prevalent in Turkey. It is on the expansiveness of the revenue that I chiefly rely, believing that a reform in the mode of assessing and collecting the imposts, and more especially a more intelligent system of customs duties, would rapidly develop the productive power of Syria, and as rapidly augment the revenue.

A loan of 5,000,000*l.* in a 6 per cent. stock would require a sum of about 400,000*l.* per annum to provide for the interest and sinking-fund; and as only three-fourths of this would be needed for the first two years, until the sinking-fund came into operation, I apprehend there could be no difficulty in providing a sufficient sum to meet that charge on the revenue; and before the larger annual amount became payable, the better administrative system should have commenced bearing fruit, in the shape of a development of commerce: for this Syria presents a wide field and great capabilities, facilities which have been rendered useless by the absence of any regular and secure Government. Capitalists are deterred from employing their funds in this country from the wretched incapacity of the tribunals to administer justice, and from the absence of any rigidly administered system of commercial law. Unless the immigration of foreign capital be encouraged by giving facilities for its employment in commercial and agricultural enterprises, and unless full security for its possession be obtained from laws equitably and vigorously administered,

it is useless to expect any rapid material progress in this country. Without a confident expectation that such progress would be made, it were vain to hope that a loan might be negotiated except on ruinous terms, such, in fact, as the Porte has to submit to from the absence of such expectation.

The natives of Syria have considerable aptitude for commerce, which might easily be fostered healthily. At present capital is scarce in the country, and traders are too much disposed to undertake operations far beyond their means. Commercial difficulties are the natural result; the tribunals are either incapable or unwilling to decide the claims which consequently arise; and hence the bad reputation which the chief centres of Syrian trade are rapidly acquiring in Europe. A good code of laws, efficient tribunals, and facilities for communication and transport by the creation of practicable and safe roads, are essential to the progress of Syria.

That much can be done to extend commerce can be shown by the progress made in the production of silk, and the consequent expansion of the imports.

With roads to the coast a valuable trade in grain, madder-roots, and dried fruits, and other products, would be created, provided cultivation were rendered secure by a proper system of police; and a similar remark applies to cotton, for the growth of which various districts offer notorious facilities.

Every addition to the exports would add largely to the consuming power of the people and stimulate imports, and I may express my belief that England would greatly benefit by such a development of Syrian trade; whereas, I apprehend that our commerce with this country shows a tendency to diminish rather than to increase under the present system.

In conclusion, I would suggest that his Excellency Fuad Pasha would do an important service by at once collecting reliable data on the existing financial resources of Syria, and on the extent to which they are at present charged. It is on the character of the information so obtained that the confidence with which capitalists would undertake the negotiation of a loan must, in a great measure, depend.

I have, &c.

(Signed) EDWARD GILBERTSON.

No. 266.

Lord Dufferin to Lord J. Russell.—(Received December 6.)

(No. 31.)

My Lord,

Beyrout, November 23, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to transmit, for your Lordship's information, copies of further despatches which I have this day addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at the Porte.

I have, &c.

(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 266.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, November 20, 1860.

I BEG leave to inform your Excellency that yesterday I received a visit from Yusef Bek Keram, the newly-appointed Kaimakam of the Northern Division of Lebanon.

He made his appearance in a scarlet robe of honour, embroidered in gold, and with all those circumstances of splendour which in this country befit a personage whom "the King delighteth to honour."

He is a young man of about 33, speaks French, and seems pretty intelligent; but I observed nothing in his conversation or countenance

that impressed me with the notion that he differed in any degree from the ordinary run of Maronite Emirs.

The antecedents of his family are obscure. His father was the first of the race who assumed the title of Sheikh, and Yusef himself only shared a Mokata with his elder brother.

Neither do his achievements seem more illustrious than his birth, since the only exertion he appears to have made during the late war consisted in collecting a body of 300 or 400 men, and remaining safe within the limits of the Kesrouan while Zahleh was being besieged, within a short distance of his camp.

Nevertheless, it is admitted it might be difficult to find a more capable person.

Under these circumstances, I trust your Excellency will consider I judged rightly in abstaining from offering the slightest opposition to his appointment when I was given to understand he would be acceptable to the French.

Moreover, as Yusef Keram is supposed to be very much in the hands of the Bishop Tobia, I did not think it unadvisable to allow the Greek portion of the Lebanon to have an opportunity of ascertaining the kind of administration they might expect were the whole Mountain consigned to the domination of the Maronites.

M. Novikow has assured me in confidence that, unless constrained by his Government, he would never consent to have his co-religionists under the sway of such a ruler.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 2 in No. 266.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, November 21, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Excellency's information, copy of the Protocol of the tenth sitting of the Syrian Commission, held on the 14th instant.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 3 in No. 266.

Protocol of the Tenth Meeting of the Syrian Commission, held at Beyrout, November 14, 1860.

LE Mercredi, quatorze Novembre, mil huit cent soixante, tous les Commissaires étant réunis à Beyrout, sous la présidence de son Excellence Fuad Pacha, la séance est ouverte à midi et demi.

Le procès-verbal est lu et adopté avec quelques légères modifications.

Fuad Pacha propose ensuite à la Commission d'examiner les diverses questions relatives à la répression et au châtement des Druses. Les arrestations vont commencer dans la Montagne; M. le Commissaire Extraordinaire de la Sublime Porte y présidera lui-même. Mais auparavant il croit devoir prendre l'avis de la Commission sur le meilleur système de procédure à adopter, sur le nombre et la nature des peines qu'il infligera, sur les moyens qu'il y aura lieu d'employer pour arriver à la découverte des coupables. Chacun de ces points soulève de difficultés, et dans le sentiment qu'il a de la lourde responsabilité qui pèse sur lui, Fuad Pacha demande à la Commission de vouloir bien l'éclairer de ses conseils.

Et d'abord quelle procédure devra-t-il adopter? Il y en a deux qui s'offrent à lui: l'une sommaire et expéditive; l'autre régulière, méthodique, et conforme aux lois régulières du pays. La première fournit de prompts

résultats, mais elle ne donne pas le temps de peser les preuves, et ne permet pas toujours de proportionner exactement la peine au degré de culpabilité. La seconde a l'inconvénient, non moins grave dans les circonstances présentes, de trop suspendre le châtement. Peut-être à une situation exceptionnelle faut-il une justice exceptionnelle. Fuad Pacha hésite entre ces deux systèmes: s'il use de la procédure sommaire, on l'accusera, comme à Damas, de frapper aveuglement; s'il a recours aux formalités de la procédure régulière, on l'accusera de tomber dans l'excès contraire.

M. le Commissaire Français n'hésite pas à déclarer qu'il est, pour sa part, fermement convaincu que le système de la procédure sommaire est le seul qu'il soit non seulement convenable, mais même possible d'adopter. Une procédure régulière et l'application des règles ordinaires de la justice entraîneraient, sinon la condamnation, au moins l'arrestation et la mise en accusation de tous les Druses, car tous ont trempé plus ou moins dans les événements qui ont ensanglanté la Montagne, et ruiné les populations chrétiennes du Liban. C'est en voulant proportionner le nombre des châtements à celui des assassinats, et en versant à froid autant de sang que les Druses en ont répandu dans leur égarement, que le Gouvernement Turc s'exposerait au reproche de barbarie. Ce qui importe avant tout, c'est de rassurer promptement les populations par un châtement exemplaire des principaux coupables. Une procédure sommaire et expéditive est seule propre à faire atteindre ce résultat; c'est donc à celle-là qu'il est indispensable d'avoir recours.

M. le Commissaire Prussien partage complètement l'opinion de M. Bécлар. Il insiste sur cette considération décisive à ses yeux, que la répression des Druses ne sera efficace que si le châtement est prompt et exemplaire.

M. Novikow est du même avis. Il fait remarquer d'ailleurs que la procédure régulière ayant été suivie à l'égard des Chefs Druses actuellement détenus à Beyrout, cette circonstance est de nature à mettre Fuad Pacha suffisamment à couvert contre le reproche de précipitation que son Excellence semble redouter. Quant à la masse des coupables de rang inférieur qui vont être arrêtés, M. le Commissaire Russe pense qu'il faudra nécessairement procéder vis-à-vis d'eux d'une manière différente, en évitant toutefois les excès d'une justice qui pourrait être taxée d'exagération.

M. le Commissaire Autrichien déclare partager complètement l'avis de M. Bécлар. Il est évident, dit-il, que la culpabilité étant partout chez les Druses, il est impossible de procéder régulièrement. Il faut se contenter de frapper vite et fort. Quant au reste de la nation Druse, M. de Weckbecker est d'avis qu'il y aurait un moyen indirect de l'atteindre, en la privant à l'avenir de tous les droits politiques dont elle était autrefois en possession. M. de Weckbecker ajoute que la solution de la question, posée par Fuad Pacha, dépend du caractère attribué par le Gouvernement Ottoman aux crimes et délits commis par les Druses. Si la Porte les considère comme des délits purement civils, et d'individus à individus, il ne semble guère que la procédure régulière puisse être abandonnée. Mais si au contraire la Sublime Porte voit dans les massacres des Chrétiens par les Druses, dans le commencement d'extermination d'une race de l'Empire par une autre race, un fait de guerre civile, un acte de rébellion, un crime de lèse-majesté, alors il est clair que le Commissaire Extraordinaire de la Sublime Porte, tant que durera l'état de siège et de désorganisation de la Montagne, doit procéder contre les Druses sommairement, militairement, et dans le libre exercice de ses pleins pouvoirs, sans observer les règles de la procédure ordinaire.

Son Excellence Fuad Pacha fait remarquer à ce sujet que les quatorze Mokatajdjis Druses actuellement détenus à Beyrout sont en effet poursuivis à raison de deux chefs: premièrement, comme coupables de n'avoir point rempli le mandat qu'ils avaient reçu de pourvoir, en qualité de Sous-Caimacams, à la sécurité de tous les habitants de leurs districts; secondement, comme complices des crimes commis contre des particuliers. Quant aux autres Chefs qui se sont enfuis, ils ont été mis hors la loi et seront jugés par contumace.

Lord Dufferin trouve que le mode de procédure qui a été approuvé par ses collègues est en effet le seul que les circonstances permettent d'adopter, choix pénible sans doute, mais inévitable, puisque le mode d'une procédure régulière serait inapplicable. Mais Lord Dufferin croit devoir ensuite faire observer que les deux systèmes étant inconciliables, le choix du système de la procédure sommaire exclue complètement l'emploi de la procédure régulière. Si donc on inflige aux Druses, d'une manière sommaire, un châtiment qui semblerait découler du principe barbare de la décimation, une fois ce sacrifice accompli, les Druses qui auront survécu devront être protégés contre de nouvelles poursuites par une amnistie générale.

Ce dernier vœu exprimé par Lord Dufferin, et le mot amnistie employé par sa Seigneurie, ayant donné lieu à des interprétations diverses, M. le Commissaire Français s'étant élevé avec énergie contre toute pensée d'une amnistie politique au profit de la nation Druse, M. le Commissaire Anglais développe son idée, et il résulte de ses explications que, par amnistie, il voulait dire une garantie à donner aux Druses pour la conservation de leurs droits civils, mais que, en ce qui concerne leurs droits publics, il était parfaitement d'accord avec ses collègues pour reconnaître que le Gouvernement avait le droit de frapper dans ses privilèges politiques une tribu qui avait commis des crimes si abominables.

Les Représentants des cinq Puissances ayant tous exprimé une opinion favorable à l'adoption du système de la procédure exceptionnelle et sommaire, Fuad Pacha croit devoir poser à la Commission d'autres questions subsidiaires, se rattachant à celle qui vient d'être examinée. Devra-t-il diriger sur Beyrouth et y réunir tous les Druses qui seront arrêtés dans la Montagne, ou instituer une sorte de tribunal ambulatoire qui, se transportant successivement dans les diverses parties de la Montagne, jugera et fera exécuter les coupables sur le théâtre même de leurs crimes ?

M. Bédard, répondant à cette question, est d'avis que la justice sommaire, adoptée en principe, doit être rendue sur les lieux, pour que son effet soit à la fois plus prompt et plus sensible.

Aucune discussion ne s'élève sur ce point, que tous les membres de la Commission envisagent de la même manière.

Son Excellence Fuad Pacha pose ensuite la question de savoir, s'il devra établir dans la Montagne, comme à Damas, plusieurs catégories de peines, correspondantes à plusieurs catégories de coupables, et appliquer la mort, le bannissement, la réclusion, l'exil, selon le degré apparent de culpabilité ? Sur ce point encore, M. le Commissaire Extraordinaire de la Sublime Porte éprouve le besoin de recevoir les conseils de la Commission. Il n'a ni le droit ni l'envie d'abdiquer la responsabilité qui pèse sur lui ; mais il sent combien elle est lourde, et c'est pour cela qu'il ne craint pas de déposer dans le sein de la Commission tous ses doutes et toutes ses perplexités. Il a besoin aussi de fixer d'avance son opinion sur la nature et le poids des preuves qu'il admettra dans cette procédure expéditive. A Damas, dit-il, il a sommé les principaux habitants de lui désigner les coupables, et c'est sur la dénonciation, sur des témoignages non oculaires, qu'il s'est le plus souvent appuyé pour dresser ses listes ; il s'est même parfois contenté de la simple déposition d'un Chrétien. Dans la Montagne la situation est toute différente. La force armée ne saurait y exercer la même influence, et au milieu d'un peuple organisé, comme le sont les Druses, en une sorte d'affiliation ou société secrète, on ne peut compter sur aucun renseignement, aucune dénonciation des Druses contre les Druses. Il sera donc nécessaire d'avoir presque exclusivement recours aux dépositions des Chrétiens ; mais alors Fuad Pacha en redoute le nombre, et, si on lui demande 1.000 ou 1.500 têtes, et s'il consent à les faire tomber, il craint de s'exposer à l'accusation d'être plus Druse que les Druses eux-mêmes, et de répondre à un massacre par une boucherie.

M. Novikow fait observer que c'est là un danger contre lequel M. le Commissaire Extraordinaire peut se prémunir. Ce n'est pas une vengeance que le Gouvernement du Sultan doit exercer contre tous les Druses, bien que tous soient coupables. Il s'agit principalement de prévenir le retour des mêmes crimes, en infligeant la peine de mort aux principaux coupables, en frappant pour ainsi dire de terreur le reste de la

nation. La répression des Druses devant encore moins consister dans des peines individuelles que dans un ensemble de mesures propres à réduire la nation entière à l'impuissance de nuire aux populations Chrétiennes, on pourrait par exemple, dit M. le Commissaire Russe, condamner à mort tous ceux qui passent pour avoir commis des atrocités et plusieurs assassinats.

Lord Dufferin saisit l'occasion qui s'offre à lui, de rappeler que les Druses n'ont exercé aucune violence contre les femmes.

M. le Commissaire Français, résumant la pensée unanime de la Commission, propose d'établir trois catégories de coupables, passibles de la peine de mort :—

1. Les instigateurs, ayant ou non pris part personnellement aux massacres.

2. Les chefs de bandes qui ont dirigé les assassins et les incendiaires.

3. Les individus dénoncés par la voix publique, comme ayant commis le plus grand nombre de meurtres, ou comme ayant agi dans des circonstances qui aggravent leur culpabilité.

Ces trois catégories de coupables, passibles de la même peine, étant admises, Fuad Pacha demande, s'il y aura d'autres degrés de culpabilité auxquels pourraient correspondre des peines de seconde et de troisième ordre.

La Commission est d'avis que cette satisfaction étant donnée à la justice, les poursuites devront cesser ; car si l'on voulait infliger une peine à tous les coupables, on ne voit pas qu'aucun Druse puisse rester sans condamnation. Toutefois, M. le Commissaire Français réserve avec soin la question de savoir quelles mesures il sera bon de prendre ultérieurement, pour faire sentir à cette population sous quelle menace elle se trouve désormais placée, et combien elle s'est rendue indigne des franchises et des privilèges dont elle était naguère en possession.

La Commission passe ensuite à l'examen d'une autre question, et il est entendu, sur la proposition de Fuad Pacha, que les notables de chaque localité seront invités par lui à faire, devant leurs Chefs Spirituelles, et sous la foi du serment, les dépositions qui, sans être, dans la plupart des cas, des témoignages oculaires, serviront cependant de base aux mises en accusation.

M. Novikow émet sur ce point l'avis, auquel se rallie la Commission, que, tout en ayant forcément recours à cette source d'informations, le Commissaire Extraordinaire de la Sublime Porte doit ne pas négliger de recevoir la déposition des témoins oculaires et des parties intéressées, sauf à tenir de ces dernières dénonciations le compte qu'il appartiendra.

M. le Commissaire Extraordinaire de la Sublime Porte, afin d'éviter l'intrigue et d'empêcher la fuite des coupables, se propose de faire désigner d'avance, confidentiellement, par les Chefs Spirituelles, ceux d'entre les notables qui sont les plus dignes de confiance, et de faire prêter par ceux-ci le serment de garder sur leur déposition le secret le plus absolu.

Avant de clore cette discussion, Lord Dufferin demande au nom de l'humanité que, puisque l'on doit avoir recours au système de la procédure sommaire, on n'aggrave pas les souffrances des individus dont le sort peut être fixé promptement, en leur donnant, pour ainsi dire, à plusieurs reprises le coup de la mort.

M. le Commissaire Français s'associe avec force au sentiment que vient d'exprimer Lord Dufferin, et demande que les personnages Druses ou Musulmans, emprisonnés à Beyrouth, et dont le procès passe pour être terminé, ne soient pas tenus longtemps entre la vie ou la mort.

Fuad Pacha répond qu'il lui tarde à lui aussi d'en terminer avec cette phase si pénible de sa mission. Mais qu'il a cependant dû surseoir au jugement ou à l'exécution des détenus de Beyrouth, parce que leur participation aux événements de la Montagne étant évidente, il se priverait, en agissant différemment, des informations qui lui seront très utiles lorsqu'il se livrera à l'appréciation de ces mêmes événements.

Les questions principales et subsidiaires relatives à la répression et au châtiment des Druses étant ainsi examinées et résolues, la Commission passe à d'autres objets et reçoit communication de divers documents, touchant le règlement des indemnités dues aux Chrétiens de Damas.

M. Bécclard, sur la prière de ses collègues, donne lecture d'un rapport de M. Outrey, Consul de France à Damas, et de deux Tableaux annexés à ce rapport, établissant, le premier, la répartition de l'impôt extraordinaire à lever sur la ville, la banlieue, et la province de Damas; le second, la répartition du montant de cette contribution.

La Commission décide qu'une copie de ces deux Tableaux sera communiquée à chacun de ses membres. Elle entend ensuite la lecture de plusieurs autres projets, élaborés par son Excellence Fuad Pacha. Elle en demande également communication.

Avant que la séance ne soit levée, M. le Commissaire Français appelle l'attention de la Commission sur une question qui a déjà été posée dans la séance précédente, celle de l'impôt du recrutement auquel, pour la première fois, les populations Chrétiennes de la Syrie viennent d'être soumises. M. Bécclard trouve au moins inopportun l'établissement d'un tel impôt dans un moment où les peuples de Syrie sont accablés par tant d'infortunes. Il croit que la Sublime Porte aurait pu profiter de l'occasion qui s'offrait à elle, de prouver à ces populations qu'elle leur porte un intérêt réel, en remettant à des temps meilleurs la perception de cet impôt d'une légalité douteuse. Un tel ajournement aurait d'ailleurs, aux yeux de M. Bécclard, l'avantage d'empêcher qu'il ne soit préjugé en rien sur les dispositions que la Commission aura à prendre ultérieurement pour la réorganisation politique et administrative de la Montagne.

Son Excellence Fuad Pacha répond à M. Bécclard que l'impôt de recrutement n'est pas un impôt exceptionnel à toutes les populations Chrétiennes de l'Empire; on peut regretter assurément que cette charge vienne peser, dans les circonstances présentes, sur les habitants de la Syrie, mais la Syrie est elle-même appelée à bénéficier du produit de cet impôt, puisque ce produit constitue une des ressources qui seront consacrées au soulagement des victimes de la guerre.

Dans l'état présent des choses, ajoute Fuad Pacha, le Gouvernement est obligé de faire appel à toutes les ressources dont il dispose légalement, et c'est à cette condition seulement qu'il pourra faire face à toutes les exigences de la situation. Quant aux abus de perception, il s'en produit; la Sublime Porte ne saurait en aucune façon en porter la responsabilité, attendu que ce n'est pas elle qui opère cette perception. Elle se fait par l'intermédiaire des Chefs de chaque communauté, auxquels il est demandé une somme totale qu'il leur est loisible de répartir entre tous les membres de la communauté, comme bon leur semble, et suivant telle règle que leur suggère leur propre équité.

M. le Commissaire Extraordinaire de la Sublime Porte fait observer, en terminant, que cette question n'a d'ailleurs aucun trait à la Montagne et à sa réorganisation à venir, puisque la Montagne, en vertu des règlements particuliers qui la régissent, ne peut être et n'est soumise à aucun autre impôt que l'impôt unique et fixe, pour le paiement duquel les Maronites et les Druses sont en retard de deux annuités.

M. Novikow fait observer qu'il serait selon lui convenable de considérer les populations Chrétiennes du littoral de la Syrie, dont les intérêts ont été gravement compromis par les événements de la Montagne, comme devant être, momentanément au moins, exemptes de l'impôt du recrutement.

Fuad Pacha objecte que, si certaines localités du littoral se trouvent dans ce cas, c'est aux Chefs de la communauté dont elles relèvent qu'il appartient de les épargner dans la répartition du montant total imposé à la communauté.

La discussion sur cet objet n'étant pas poussée plus avant, la séance est levée à cinq heures.

(Suivent les signatures.)

Inclosure 4 in No. 266.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, November 22, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Excellency copy of an extract of a private letter from a very respectable American Missionary, containing an account of a most extraordinary circumstance. Before crediting every particular I should like to make Mr. Benton's report the subject of further inquiry, with the result of which I shall have the honour of acquainting your Excellency by next mail.

I have, &c.

(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 5 in No. 266.

The Rev. W. Benton to Lord Dufferin.

(Extract.)

November 22, 1860.

ALLOW me herewith to submit my statement that the French gentleman M. Portalis, of Betathir, on charge that the people of Bhamdun had received in their village Druse property, demanded from every tax-payer the presentation of six rottols of raisins, and a certain quantity of wheat and barley at his factory at Betathir within six days from Saturday last, and threatened if it was not done to come with French soldiers and plunder the village. And on Friday of last week he took by force some ten centars (1000 rottols) of raisins, twenty rottols dibbs, and other property from the house of the Orthodox Greek priest, Mikhail of Betathir, and whipped him and his wife, and used uncivil language in his search for Druse property.

I most certainly believe and depose and say that this statement is faithful and true, and I respectfully do commend the same to the special consideration of his Lordship the English Commissioner.

Inclosure 6 in No. 266.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, November 22, 1860.

DEEMING it likely that the Greek Christians of Bhamdun would go and complain to my Russian colleague M. Novikow of the ill-usage they had met with at the hands of M. Portalis, I considered it possible that an opportune visit might furnish me with an occasion for ascertaining the views of that gentleman as to the future prospects of his co-religionists in Syria. On my arrival at the house of the Russian Commissioner I found that the villagers in question had just concluded the statement of their case, and that a very disagreeable impression had been made on the mind of my colleague. The matter immediately in hand having been disposed of, the conversation naturally fell into the channel I had expected, and it was not difficult to perceive the dislike with which M. Novikow regarded any plan involving a Maronite ascendancy.

Having discussed the French proposal of an independent Principality, which pre-supposed the cession by the Porte of three such important places as Tripoli, Saïda, and Beyrout, I stated that although I had no reason whatever to suppose my Government intended the Commission should take upon itself to suggest arrangements affecting places beyond the precincts of the Lebanon, yet, if we were to give the reins to our imagination, it might be possible to devise a plan more generally beneficent in its operations. If the privileges of the Lebanon were to be arbitrarily extended on the west, why should the inhabitants of Hasbeya and Rasheya be excluded from a share in them? If we were to force from the Porte a

concession which would virtually compromise the independence of the province, would it not be better to make the most of our bargain and extend the advantages to be derived from European intervention, not only to the Maronites, but to all the Christians of the country?

An independent Lebanon implied a Maronite ascendancy: a Greek and Maronite duality being simply impossible. But by assimilating the condition of the Maronites to that of the other Christian sects, a more united sympathy would be created in Europe in behalf of the entire Christian community of Syria; whereas, if the French were allowed to obtain an exceptional supremacy for their own protégés, it may be expected they will become indifferent to the fate of the members of the other rites.

It would be preferable therefore to decrease the degree to which one sect of Christians were to be rendered autonomous in order to spread a more limited independence over a larger surface.

This, after all, might be easily effected. If only the government of the province were conducted on the principle of its individual responsibility, our object would be attained. With such security for its good behaviour as this method would imply, a Turkish administration would prove not merely the only possible, but the only desirable, medium for the conduct of affairs. And under these circumstances a single ruler for the whole province might be preferable to a bevy of subordinate Pashas constantly sheltering themselves behind their instructions, and refusing to redress the most crying evils until they shall have communicated with a distant capital.

To all this M. Novikow gave a very satisfied attention, and I think I may assert that unless his private opinion is modified by what he hears from home, my Russian colleague would be willing to adopt all the main features of the scheme I had the honour to submit to your Excellency's consideration in my despatch of the 4th instant.

That M. Novikow still clings to the notion of a Greek Christian *imperium* cannot be denied; yet, when I remarked to him that, in proportion as you increased the independence of the subordinate you diminished the responsibility of the Chief, and that by exciting his jealousy you tempted him to trouble the system you had imposed, so perpetuating the worst features of the old organization, he seemed to waver in his views, and finally consented to accede to the principle I was anxious to establish, provided only the Christianity of the Mountain was declared to be inviolable.

To this I replied that the Mountain had never yet been wholly Christian; and the conversation concluded by my saying that I had little doubt we could easily settle all matters of detail provided the important principle of the individual responsibility and consequent supremacy of the head of the Government was fully acknowledged.

I have reason to believe that M. de Weckbecker coincides in the above views. Consequently had I authority from your Excellency to submit to the Commission the plan proposed in my despatch above mentioned, there is a considerable probability of its meeting with the approbation of my Turkish, Russian, Prussian, and Austrian colleagues.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

No. 267.

Consul-General Colquhoun to Lord J. Russell.—(Received December 6.)

(No. 155.)

My Lord,

Alexandria, November 25, 1860.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 149 of the 7th instant, I beg to inclose, for your Lordship's information, copy of a private note received from Cherif Pasha on the subject of assistance given by the Viceroy, at Lord Dufferin's request, to the sufferers at Beyrout.

Your Lordship will observe that Said Pasha has generously given 500 ardebs (about 2,500 bushels) of wheat. I have made arrangements

with a highly respectable shipping agent here for putting this wheat in sacks and sending it to Beyrout at half freight. This gift is precious; for, as the quality is of the best, it will be distributed as seed, and thus, perhaps, we may avert what is at present very threatening, namely, a famine next year.

I have conveyed, through Cherif Pasha, my grateful sense of the Viceroy's generosity.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ROBERT G. COLQUHOUN.

Inclosure in No. 267.

Cherif Pasha to Consul-General Colquhoun.

M. l'Agent et Consul-Général,

Caire, le 17 Novembre, 1860.

SON Altesse le Viceroy, auquel son Excellence König Bey s'est empressé de donner communication de la lettre par laquelle vous priez son Altesse de fournir des vivres et des vêtements aux Chrétiens de Syrie, m'a chargé de vous répondre que pour ce qui concerne le riz, il se trouve dans l'impossibilité absolue d'en envoyer dans cette contrée, parcequ'il n'en est point approvisionné pour le moment. Mais, à défaut de riz, son Altesse, toujours disposée à venir au secours des malheureux, a donné immédiatement des ordres pour que 500 ardebs de blé fussent expédiés du plus tôt en Syrie.

Quant aux vêtements son Altesse serait également dans l'impossibilité de répondre à votre désir; car elle se borne habituellement à faire venir les dits vêtements, tels que pantalons, capotes et autres, au fur et à mesure des besoins de ses troupes, et ne peut ainsi en avoir un approvisionnement.

Son Altesse regrette vivement que les circonstances ne lui permettent point de satisfaire entièrement à vos intentions généreuses; mais elle est bien persuadée, M. l'Agent et Consul-Général, que vous tiendrez compte de ces circonstances, et que vous verrez avant tout qu'elle a fait tout ce qu'elle peut faire pour le moment.

Veillez, &c.
(Signé) CHERIF PASHA.

No. 268.

Lord J. Russell to Lord Dufferin.

(No. 40.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, December 7, 1860.

WITH reference to your despatch of the 22nd ultimo to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, I have to acquaint your Lordship that I approve the language which you held to M. Novikow relative to the expediency of settling the question as to the Lebanon in accordance with the principles laid down in the plan which you have proposed for that purpose.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 269.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received December 12.)

(No. 1,593.)

My Lord,

Paris, December 11, 1860.

I HAD a conversation of some length yesterday with M. Thouvenel upon the affairs of Syria.

To sum up the result as succinctly as possible, M. Thouvenel repeated

the assurances which he has before given me, that France has no desire to play a separate part in the drama which is enacting there. She wishes for an early settlement of a stable Government in the Lebanon, in order that she may bring away her troops; but she is convinced that neither Her Majesty's nor any other Government can desire that their departure should be the signal for a renewal of the atrocities committed during the last summer.

The French Commissioner is urged in every instruction which goes to him, to press his colleagues to enter into discussion on the future government of the Mountain, for, until order is restored there, it will be impossible, in his (M. Thouvenel's) opinion, that any decision can be taken by the Powers with regard to the withdrawal of the troops of occupation.

With respect to the future government of the Mountain, M. Thouvenel declared that he had formed no opinion, nor had he sent any instructions to M. Bédard. It was, however, a point on which he feared there might be a difference of opinion between Her Majesty's Government and that which he represented, and he was, therefore, anxious that some understanding between them should be attempted, either in London or here.

There was but one solution to which *à priori* he must object, viz., any attempt to impose direct Turkish rule in the Lebanon. His objections rested on two grounds: first, because direct Turkish rule never had existed there; and, secondly, because he was convinced that direct Turkish rule had led to the horrible atrocities which had lately taken place. The aim of the Porte had ever been, where she had the power, to play off hostile tribes against each other. Nobody had been more convinced of this fact than Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, who had taken so large a part in the settlement of the last government of the Mountain. Nobody had insisted with more energy on the rights of the Maronites and Druses to govern themselves, and it had been with reluctance that he had consented to the establishment of Turkish rule in the Mixed districts. But what had been the consequence of this limited direct Turkish action? He (M. Thouvenel) did not hesitate to attribute to it the late occurrences. The Maronites were first excited by the Turks to provoke the Druses, and the Druses were then stirred up and permitted to massacre the Maronites. Now, the Druses would be punished in their turn, by which the Porte would gain its point, and effectually reduce the strength of both tribes. What had occurred now, would occur again, if power were to be left to the Porte.

He had no desire that the Maronites should be better treated than the Druses. Both races probably, were equally to blame, and, to a certain extent, considering that their feuds were blood feuds, equally to be excused.

The question for the Powers to consider was, how these feuds were to be prevented for the future. He was far from saying that the arrangement of 1846 was not susceptible of improvement, but he was convinced that it would not be improved by the substitution of direct Turkish rule for the Government then instituted. If Her Majesty's Government were of the same opinion, great delays might, he thought, be avoided by an early and frank declaration to the Turkish Government that no combination for that purpose would be agreed to. Otherwise, we might be sure that every device would be resorted to by Fuad Pasha to obtain this end.

I replied that I received M. Thouvenel's assurances with satisfaction, and that I would convey them to Her Majesty's Government. But I added that I feared that General Beaufort did not quite understand the position in which he was placed, and that, with an impatience which, perhaps, was not altogether unnatural, he seemed at times on the point of taking matters into his own hands. But I must recall to M. Thouvenel's recollection, that the French troops in Syria represented European troops, and that, beyond the necessary authority which every General must exercise for the safety of his troops, General Beaufort was not a free agent, and ought to take no step without the concurrence of the Commission sitting at Beyrout. Moreover, I said, General Beaufort's language sometimes implied that he was in Syria for an unlimited length of time, whereas

the period of occupation had been determined by a European Convention.

M. Thouvenel expressed some surprise at this statement, and said that it was not borne out by General Beaufort's own despatches, which showed, on the contrary, that he had abstained from much that he considered necessary, in consequence of his desire to show that he understood the exigencies of his situation.

M. Thouvenel expressed at the same time his entire concurrence in the definition which I had given of the position of the French army of occupation.

Passing to the future government of the Lebanon, I remarked that, whatever that Government might be, the great difficulty to contend against would be to find a man capable of conducting it. I should not be afraid of direct Turkish rule, if I knew of an upright man to put it in force. I would say the same thing of any other rule.

But I added—and I am sure your Lordship will approve of my having done so—that Her Majesty's Government had, in the Commissioner whom they had sent to Syria, a nobleman perfectly competent to deal with this complicated question. I had been much struck, I said, with the plain good sense which pervaded Lord Dufferin's reports, and his conclusions seemed to me generally sound. He had not gone to Syria with any preconceived opinions, and he was most anxious and ready to examine and discuss any plan which might be brought forward by any of his colleagues.

M. Thouvenel replied that both M. Bédard and General Beaufort fully appreciated Lord Dufferin's character and talents, and had written in the highest terms of his Lordship's conciliatory and moderate dispositions.

On my observing that if it should be deemed necessary to prolong the foreign occupation of Syria, it might be effected by a smaller body of mixed troops, M. Thouvenel said that the Emperor was most anxious that other troops besides French should undertake this duty.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

P.S.—I think it necessary to add, after reading over my despatch, that M. Thouvenel, while pronouncing himself in favour of the Lebanon enjoying its own autonomy, does not mean to insist that the populations should not be nominally under the Porte's Governor in Syria.

C.

No. 270.

Aali Pasha to M. Musurus.—(Communicated to Lord J. Russell by M. Musurus, December 15.)

M. l'Ambassadeur,

Le 28 Novembre, 1860.

J'AI eu l'honneur de recevoir votre dépêche du 8 Novembre, par laquelle vous me rendez compte de l'entretien que vous avez eu avec Lord John Russell sur l'éventualité d'une proposition ayant pour objet la prolongation de l'occupation Française en Syrie au delà du terme fixé par la Convention, et l'augmentation de l'effectif du corps expéditionnaire.

Il est inutile de vous dire, M. l'Ambassadeur, combien la Sublime Porte est satisfaite de voir Lord John Russell partager à cet égard l'opinion que vous avez émise au nom du Gouvernement Impérial. Cette conformité de vues produira son effet, nous n'en doutons pas, et préviendra plus d'une difficulté ultérieure dans cette malheureuse question de la Syrie. La Sublime Porte n'a jamais considéré l'intervention Européenne comme nécessaire ou utile; et, si elle y a adhéré, c'était uniquement par déférence pour ses alliés et pour donner une preuve nouvelle de sa confiance illimitée dans leurs dispositions à son égard. Mais si, à une époque où l'Europe voyait toute la Syrie être en feu, cette mesure pouvait se justifier, aujourd'hui elle n'a plus sa raison d'être, après que la but

poursuivi a été en grande partie atteint, et que les villes qui ont été le théâtre des plus tragiques événements ont été réduites sans coup férir, par le seul prestige de l'autorité du Sultan, représentée par son Excellence Fuad Pacha.

Il en résulte que l'intervention, perdant ainsi de jour en jour le caractère d'un secours accordé à la Sublime Porte, ne pourrait plus être, comme vous l'avez si bien fait remarquer à Lord John Russell, qu'un embarras et un obstacle à la pacification de la Montagne et au rétablissement complet de l'ordre.

Les Puissances ne peuvent manquer de s'en rendre compte; et l'appréciation de la question par le Cabinet de Sa Majesté Britannique nous est un sûr garant qu'aucune suite ne sera donnée au projet d'une prolongation de l'occupation, et d'une augmentation quelconque des forces Françaises en Syrie.

Veillez, M. l'Ambassadeur, exprimer nos remerciements à sa Seigneurie pour ses dispositions à l'égard de ce projet, et agréiez, &c.

(Signé) AALI.

No. 271.

Lord Dufferin to Lord J. Russell.—(Received December 15.)

(No. 34.)

My Lord,

Beyrout, November 28, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Lordship's information, copies of further despatches which I have addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at the Porte.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 271.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, November 27, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Excellency's information, copy of the Protocol of the eleventh sitting of the Syrian Commission held on the 17th instant.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 2 in No. 271.

Protocol of the Eleventh Meeting of the Syrian Commission, held at Beyrout, November 17, 1860.

LE Samedi, dix-sept Novembre, mil huit cent soixante, tous les Commissaires étant réunis à Beyrout, sous la présidence de Fuad Pacha, la séance est ouverte à deux heures et demie.

Le procès-verbal est lu et adopté, après quelques modifications. L'ordre du jour appelle ensuite l'examen des questions relatives à la réparation des dommages soufferts par les Chrétiens de Damas. Son Excellence Fuad Pacha fait observer à ce sujet qu'il y a deux principes entre lesquels la Commission est d'abord obligée de se prononcer: le principe d'une somme fixe, approximative, et déterminée à l'avance, et le principe d'une enquête judiciaire préalable, de nature à permettre d'apprécier rigoureusement le chiffre des dommages soufferts par chaque individu en particulier.

Une conversation s'engage entre MM. les Commissaires sur les avantages et les inconvénients de ces deux systèmes, et après une mûre délibération il est entendu que l'on adoptera le principe d'une somme fixe et

déterminée à l'avance. La Commission est unanimement d'avis que ce système a l'inappréciable avantage de garantir immédiatement aux Chrétiens l'indemnisation, et, en leur donnant ainsi tout d'abord un grand soulagement moral, de les encourager à retourner à Damas, et à y reprendre leurs travaux habituels; tandis que le système d'une enquête judiciaire préalable, bien qu'il soit en lui-même plus strictement conforme aux règles de la justice, aurait, au point de vue politique et pratique, le grave inconvénient de prolonger, peut-être pendant une ou plusieurs années, le procès que les particuliers engageraient séparément avec la Sublime Porte, et laisserait ainsi peser les incertitudes les plus fâcheuses sur la réalisation finale des indemnités.

M. Novikow voudrait cependant que, par une disposition accessoire, on ajoutât à la somme fixe et déterminée à l'avance, comme minimum, une sorte de réserve extensible, moyennant laquelle on pourrait indemniser ceux que l'on reconnaîtrait plus tard ne l'avoir pas été suffisamment. C'est là, selon M. Novikow, un tempérament utile à apporter à la rigueur du système sommaire adopté par la Commission. M. le Commissaire Russe fait observer que cette restriction devrait, dans sa pensée, s'appliquer principalement aux dernières catégories, composée d'individus nécessiteux pour lesquels une différence de quelque milliers de piastres ne laisse pas que d'être importante.

M. Béclard est d'avis que l'idée de M. Novikow, si elle était réalisée, ne constituerait pas seulement une modification, mais entraînerait le renversement complet du système dont la Commission juge l'emploi nécessaire. Ce que veut la Commission, c'est aviser promptement et régler d'urgence, en évitant la longueur interminable des procès particuliers, une grande question d'intérêt public. C'est pour cela qu'elle croit devoir garantir aux victimes une somme totale d'indemnité dont elles se contenteront, dès qu'elles n'auront plus à en espérer d'autres. Mais si l'on ajoute à cette somme fixe un fonds indéterminé, destiné à payer des indemnités oubliées ou des compléments d'indemnité, alors on retombe dans l'incertitude et dans l'inconvénient des procès particuliers; personne ne sera satisfait de son lot, le fonds de réserve deviendra le point de mire de toutes les convoitises. La question de réparation trainera en longueur et l'on perdra ainsi tout le bénéfice politique et moral du système que la Commission a cru devoir adopter.

Les divers autres membres de la Commission étant également d'avis qu'il faut s'en tenir au principe d'une somme fixe et déterminée, après la répartition de laquelle toute réclamation en indemnité ou complément d'indemnité sera interdite, M. Novikow propose à la Commission de faire du moins une réserve en faveur des établissements religieux. Ces établissements, dit-il, méritent qu'on leur témoigne un intérêt spécial. Leurs biens mobiliers et immobiliers provenaient en majeure partie de fondations pieuses, et cette circonstance ne permet pas de les placer sur le même pied que les biens des simples particuliers. La transaction que ceux-ci peuvent accepter ne semble pas possible avec les établissements religieux, car on ne saurait transiger avec la volonté des donateurs qui n'existent plus. En outre, les établissements religieux pouvant être assimilés pour le matériel de leurs pertes aux propriétaires privés les plus aisés, il est juste et moral d'établir une distinction entre les bijoux, la vaisselle d'or ou d'argent qui ont appartenu à de simples particuliers, et les vases sacrés ou autres objets précieux, servant aux cérémonies du culte et entourés de la vénération de tous les Chrétiens. Il serait donc convenable, selon M. Novikow, de créer une exception en faveur des établissements religieux, et de les mettre à même de recevoir, non point par catégories, mais individuellement, le montant intégral des pertes qu'ils trouveraient avoir essuyées.

Son Excellence Fuad Pacha remarque que la motion de M. Novikow peut être considérée comme étant jusqu'à un certain point résolue par la distinction qu'il y a lieu d'établir entre les établissements religieux indigènes et les établissements religieux étrangers. La Commission n'a point à s'occuper de ces derniers, car, en tant que sujets directs d'une Puissance étrangère, les établissements religieux étrangers ne peuvent être indemnisés qu'à la suite d'une entente séparée entre le Plénipotentiaire Ottoman et les Commissaires de la Puissance intéressée. Il est de ces

établissements, comme des Consuls et des propriétés mobilières des sujets étrangers. Le chiffre total de l'indemnité collective dont s'occupe actuellement la Commission, ne saurait donc en tout état de cause s'appliquer qu'à trois espèces de personnes: (1), aux sujets Chrétiens du Sultan, protégés ou non par une Puissance étrangère; (2), aux sujets étrangers, en ce qui concerne leurs biens immobiliers; (3), aux établissements religieux indigènes.

Sans émettre aucun doute sur la différence fondamentale qui existe entre les propriétés étrangères et les propriétés indigènes, M. Novikow maintient sa proposition, en ce qui concerne les établissements religieux indigènes. Si la Commission, dit-il, a unanimement admis, pour l'indemnisation des particuliers, une somme totale à répartir entr'eux par catégories, et fixée d'avance approximativement, c'est que les ayant-droit civils sont trop nombreux pour qu'on puisse leur accorder sans inconvénient le bénéfice d'une évaluation exacte de leurs pertes, et parce qu'eux-mêmes préfèrent recevoir une indemnité inférieure peut-être à ce qui leur serait rigoureusement dû, mais payable de suite, plutôt que de supporter les délais d'une enquête judiciaire, longue, et minutieuse. Ce motif n'existe pas pour les communautés religieuses, qui ne sont qu'au nombre de cinq, et qui ont la faculté d'attendre, plus que de simples particuliers, le paiement intégral de tout ce qui leur est dû, pourvu toutefois que la vérification ne traîne pas trop en longueur. M. le Commissaire Russe ajoute que son Excellence Foad Pacha pourrait se faire renseigner à cet égard par les Chefs mêmes de ces communautés, et il termine en déclarant qu'il maintient sa proposition.

M. le Président de la Commission invite alors chacun des membres à faire connaître, successivement et par ordre alphabétique, son avis sur la proposition de M. Novikow.

M. le Commissaire d'Autriche admet la convenance d'une enquête particulière à l'égard des établissements religieux, mais il demande à quelle nature de ressources on fera appel pour les indemniser, si le chiffre de leur indemnité n'est établi que postérieurement à l'imposition extraordinaire et en dehors de cet impôt. M. de Weckbecker exprime alors la crainte que, placés en dehors de cette grande mesure de l'impôt qui seule garantit l'indemnisation, les établissements religieux ne souffrent en réalité de la proposition que M. Novikow vient de faire dans l'intention de les favoriser.

M. le Commissaire Français pense que la Commission doit se tenir, aussi fermement attachée que possible, au principe du système qu'elle a déjà adopté. Il est avantageux, dit M. Bédard, que le Plénipotentiaire Ottoman puisse faire connaître, en une seule fois et le plus tôt possible, le montant total, c'est-à-dire, le chiffre complet des indemnités que son Gouvernement garantit aux populations Chrétiennes. L'effet moral en sera plus grand. Mais la Commission peut, sans abandonner le principe convenu, donner à l'enquête sur les pertes subies par les Chrétiens, et notamment par les établissements religieux indigènes, tout le degré de précision désirable. Le projet qu'il a eu l'honneur de soumettre à la Commission dans la séance précédente, et qui a servi de point de départ à la discussion, n'est qu'un simple document. La Commission a pu en adopter le principe, mais elle n'est pas tenue pour cela de le suivre dans tous ses détails, et chacun des membres de la Commission, d'après ses propres informations, sentira peut-être le besoin de proposer d'autres chiffres que ceux qui sont indiqués dans les deux tableaux annexés au rapport de M. Outrey. En ce qui concerne les établissements religieux indigènes, M. Bédard pense que, sans rendre interminable le règlement de leur indemnité, par l'adoption à leur égard du principe de la réclamation judiciaire et individuelle, la Commission ferait bien de réunir, dans une de ses prochaines séances, toutes les informations que ses membres pourront recueillir séparément, et de fixer seulement alors le chiffre des indemnités qui seront payées à ces établissements.

M. le Commissaire de la Grande Bretagne réserve à son tour le droit qui appartient à chacun des membres de la Commission, de rechercher par lui-même quelle peut être au juste l'étendue des pertes éprouvées par les habitants civils ou religieux de Damas. Il cite en substance les renseigne-

ments qui lui ont été fournis par une personne digne de confiance, et d'après laquelle une somme de 1,250,000/ sterling serait suffisante pour procéder à l'indemnisation générale des Chrétiens de Damas. Lord Dufferin ne peut donc qu'adopter le moyen terme proposé par M. Bédard.

M. le Commissaire Prussien déclare également l'adopter, mais sans avoir égard à la nature religieuse des établissements dont il s'agit, lesquels à ses yeux ne peuvent prétendre à aucune faveur. S'il y avait, ajoute expressément M. le Commissaire Prussien, une différence à établir entre les biens religieux et les biens civils, elle devrait être au profit de ces derniers: car l'Eglise peut être pauvre, et les établissements religieux peuvent à la rigueur se passer de leurs richesses, tandis que les familles, dépouillées non seulement de leurs objets de luxe, mais de tout ce qui est indispensable à la vie, lui paraissent devoir inspirer une plus grande sollicitude.

M. le Commissaire Russe déclare que le principe de la vérification qu'il réclamait pour les établissements religieux indigènes étant admis pour toutes les catégories, il y adhère complètement et appuie la proposition de M. le Commissaire Français.

Son Excellence le Plénipotentiaire Ottoman, voyant la Commission toute entière se rallier à cette proposition, en résume les termes, et il est entendu que chacun des Commissaires apportera, à la séance de Mercredi en huit ou Samedi prochain, si faire se peut, le résultat des informations qu'il aura recueillies sur la nature et l'étendue, aussi précises que possible, des pertes éprouvées par les établissements religieux indigènes de Damas.

La séance est levée à cinq heures.

(Suivent les signatures.)

Inclosure 3 in No. 271.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, November 28, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that during the course of the conversation I had the pleasure of having with Joseph Keram, the newly-appointed Christian Kaimakam, as reported in my despatch of the 20th instant, that gentleman stated to me that, in his opinion, there would be no difficulty whatever in inducing the Christians and Druses to live together in perfect harmony, provided no positive influence was exerted to promote dissension between them.

This statement is all the more important as it was perfectly voluntary on the part of M. Keram, and was in no degree a reply to a leading question.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 4 in No. 271.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, November 28, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to inclose, for your Excellency's information, copy of a letter I have addressed to Mr. Vice-Consul Rogers relative to the statement made by M. de Rehues at the last sitting of the Conference, that ammunition from the Government stores of Acre had been lately forwarded to the Druses of the Hauran.

Your Excellency will perceive by Mr. Rogers' reply, copy of which I have also the honour to inclose, that there does not seem to have been any adequate foundation for so grave a charge.

It is certainly to be regretted that more care should not be taken in sifting evidence upon the faith of which facts so damnatory to the Turkish Government are formally submitted to the consideration of the Commission.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 5 in No. 271.

Lord Dufferin to Vice-Consul Rogers.

Sir,

Beyrout, November 24, 1860.

A REPORT having reached me that a caravan of camels, laden with ammunition supplied from the Government stores of Acre, was seen proceeding, accompanied by Druses, in the direction of the Hauran, I should be glad to know whether such a circumstance has come to your knowledge.

I address this inquiry more especially to you, as I am told the fact was certified by a dragoman in the service of two English travellers.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 6 in No. 271.

Vice-Consul Rogers to Lord Dufferin.

My Lord,

Beyrout, November 24, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge receipt of your Lordship's letter of this day's date, and, in reply, to state that a short time before I left Caiffa, two English gentlemen, named Dr. Hooker and Mr. D. Hanbury, arrived there, and I was informed by them, and by their dragoman Gabriel Schembri, a Maltese resident at Jerusalem, that on or about the 1st instant, at or near Medgdal Krum, they had met a caravan of camels going eastwards; that the dragoman asked the camel-driver, who happened to be a Druse, what he was carrying, but he received an evasive answer; he then asked a Turkish soldier (but whether he was a Regular or an Irregular I do not remember), who told him that the camels were laden with ammunition. The said dragoman's suspicions were raised by these circumstances.

As soon as I had an opportunity, I made inquiries at Caiffa, from people who had been in Acre, and I was distinctly informed that the ammunition in question was being forwarded to Damascus; and I was satisfied that the circumstances did not merit further investigation.

I have, &c.
(Signed) E. T. ROGERS.

Inclosure 7 in No. 271.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, November 28, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to transmit for your Excellency's information, copy of a report by Mr. Vice-Consul Rogers of the disagreeable occurrence alluded to in my previous despatch of the 22nd instant, as having lately taken place in the neighbourhood of Bhamdun.

It would seem that Mr. Benton's statement is fully borne out by the facts of the case. A private person professedly armed with authority by

the French General, and supported by French troops, though in no way recognized by Fuad Pasha, descends upon a Christian village, beats the priest, knocks down his wife, plunders his property, and finally levies a fine upon its inhabitants under pain of their houses being given up to pillage. When such acts of unauthorized barbarity are perpetrated under the auspices of the Commander of an auxiliary force in a friendly country, it is not to be expected that the authority of the Native Government can be long respected.

When I requested M. B  clard to account for the circumstance, he stated that the gentleman in question must be considered merely to have acted as an interpreter to the French officer in command: while M. de Beaufort seemed inclined to make light of the occurrence, inasmuch as his Excellency Fuad Pasha had consented to accept his disavowal of all complicity in the transaction.

To any one, however, admitted, like myself, to the confidence of his Excellency, it is very plain that these acts of intolerable violence and usurpation render him justly indignant. He has even taken some not very effectual measures to reassert the outraged dignity of his Government; but it is evident that the ambiguous and independent position of the French General imposes on his nervous susceptibilities, and keeps him in a state of perpetual embarrassment.

Perhaps it might be an exaggeration to assert that M. Portalis' conduct is an ordinary instance of the system practised by French Agents in this country; but it may be undoubtedly accepted as a true, though aggravated, indication of the spirit which characterizes their conduct. To bring the Government into contempt, to stimulate discontent, and render the districts they occupy as little amenable to Turkish control as possible, appear to be their unrelenting endeavour.

Under these circumstances, I beg to express my opinion that the continuance of the occupation of the Lebanon by the French force is highly prejudicial to the interests of the Porte. As I have already observed in my letter to Major Fraser, a wound irritated by the presence of a foreign substance would sooner heal than the troubles of the Mountain be composed so long as the French army remains within its precincts. Full authority should be given to Fuad Pasha to order its return to Beyrout. Its presence is not necessary to the preservation of peace, or to the security of the Mixed districts. Indeed, so pernicious am I beginning to consider its influence, that I am almost prepared to say it would be well that it should be at once withdrawn from the country. Upon this extreme contingency, however, I should be glad, for the present, to reserve my opinion.

In this place, a universal opinion prevails among all the Europeans, that immediately on its departure a massacre of the Christians would ensue. Such a fear I believe to be entirely unfounded. Though undoubtedly its presence was at first quite a necessity, I have long been convinced that Fuad Pasha is in a position to exercise perfect control over the most fanatical portion of the population.

But when I consider the means of agitation at the disposal of the priesthood, the real panic still extant among the Christians, and the determination of the French to resort to the least reputable means at their disposal for creating such appearances as may seem to render their departure impossible, I am disposed to think that unnecessary as is their presence as long as Fuad Pasha exercises unlimited control, it will require considerable deliberation to prepare the way for their final evacuation of the country.

The reconcentration of the whole French army in the neighbourhood of Beyrout is, however, a most important and desirable preliminary.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 8 in No. 271.

Vice-Consul Rogers to Lord Dufferin.

My Lord,

Beyrout, November 26, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to report that, on Saturday the 24th instant, I went to Bhamdun, where I visited Mr. Benton, from whom I gained the necessary information, and on the following morning I proceeded to Betathir, where I found the French flag hoisted over a building in connection with M. Portalis' factory, and many French soldiers lounging about.

Arrived at the house of the Greek priest Mikhail, I made inquiries about the recent proceedings of M. Portalis and of the French soldiers. I took the depositions of the said priest, his wife, and his son Elias, which agree in all essential points.

The evidence is to this effect:—About ten days ago M. F. Portalis sent for the Christians of the village, and told them that if any of them had property belonging to the Druses they were to keep it, subject to his orders, and not to restore it to the owners. Elias, son of the priest, answered M. Portalis, informing him that a long time ago a Druse named Khalil Hakim had hired a room from him, but that he had lately fled to the Hauran leaving a little property in the room, and before starting he had thrown the key to his (Elias') mother. That when he (Elias) found that the Druse had left the key and gone away, requiring more space for his harvest of raisins, he stored some in the said room. M. Portalis was apparently satisfied with this statement, and said that he only required Druse property.

When the soldiers came to search the Christian houses he (Elias) reminded M. F. Portalis of what he had told him before. He demanded a list of the property belonging to the Druse. Elias answered that a list could be very easily made; but he did not like to make it himself, saying, "Everything here belongs to the Druse excepting these raisins." The searching party found several mattresses in the rooms, and amongst them two which they considered were Christian property, so they took them away.

On Friday, 17th instant, three men named Yussuf Ahhad, Khalil Elia, and Yussuf Tames, accompanied by Fadlalla, the Commandant's dragoman, and a number of French soldiers and Maronite Christian peasantry, came to the house of the Greek priest. They carried away from the small room all the property belonging to the Druse as indicated by the priest; but they left the rest. They then went to the residence of the priest, who immediately gave up some property belonging to other Druses, namely, some wheat and a few bags of raisins. M. Fortuné Portalis then presented himself, and with him a female searcher named Nède. He said to the priest, "Oh you pig! will you dare to conceal Druse property?" and struck him with the point of his stick in the stomach. The priest answered, "No, Sir, this is not just. I have shown you the Druse property, but this is really mine." In answer M. Portalis struck him again with the point of his stick in the chest, by which he was hurt, and thereupon his wife came to interpose, saying, "This is really our property." The female searcher pushed the priest's wife down on the ground, and when she rose M. Portalis struck her one blow on her back; the priest interposed, and he then struck him on the shoulder a hard blow. The priest then left the room, saying that even if they took away everything belonging to him, he would not stand by and be beaten. They took away about sixteen cantars of raisins belonging to the priest, and what little they left, in jars, was declared by M. F. Portalis to be confiscated, and he defied the priest to touch it. Some of this property was taken to M. F. Portalis' store-room, and some left in the room which had been hired by the Druse Khalil Hakim, the door of which M. Portalis sealed.

The priest's wife spat blood almost immediately after the blow, and her son asked M. Portalis for some remedy; he replied that another blow would cure her.

M. Portalis has placed four relations of the said priest under arrest, and they are still confined in his factory. They are accused of having

concealed Druse property. They are not allowed to communicate with their friends. Their names are Tames-abo-Shakra, Murad-abo-Shakra, Dhabar Nejin, and Saab Hanna.

Khalifé Abdalla also testified to the correctness of the above statement of M. Portalis' proceedings towards the priest and his wife.

Mitri-abo-Absi and Eassa Rizk, of the same village, deposed to their having been severely beaten by M. Portalis, and a quantity of their own wheat taken from them.

Moreover, I have the honour to report to your Lordship that M. F. Portalis is acting in a most extraordinary manner in levying forced contributions from the peasantry, and that in these despotic proceedings he makes use of the name and authority of the French General, as will be seen by the inclosed document in Arabic bearing M. F. Portalis' signature. I have the honour also to inclose a literal translation of the same.

I would add that M. Portalis appears chiefly to levy these contributions amongst the Greek community, leaving the Maronites to a great extent unmolested. The peasantry expressed their fear of M. Portalis, owing to the presence of French troops under his command.

I have, &c.

(Signed) E. T. ROGERS.

Inclosure 9 in No. 271.

M. Portalis to the Sheikhs of Shânei.

(Translation.)

November 16, 1860.

To our dear friends the (Christian) Sheikhs of Shânei.

ACCORDING to the instructions given to me by the General commanding the French troops, that I should exert myself to recover all things that were plundered from the Christians, and as this order refers to all kinds of plunder, its execution will require a long time to effect. I have deemed it necessary to begin by recovering wheat and eatables for the preservation of the life of God's servants, and afterwards we purpose exerting ourselves for the recovery of the rest of the plunder, even to a mitkal (a very small weight). I therefore hereby inform you that you, who pay the Government taxes great and small, are required to pay six mids of wheat, three mids of barley, and ten rottols of raisins each. These articles must be clean and of the best quality. I grant you a term of five days from this date, within which time you are to deliver the said contributions. Otherwise I shall march upon you with soldiers, and you will have to pay double the amount. This is sufficient for your information. May you be preserved!

(Signed)

FORTUNE PORTALIS,

President of the Relief Committee of Hamâna.

Inclosure 10 in No. 271.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, November 28, 1860.

I HAVE the honour of transmitting to your Excellency copy of a despatch I have addressed to Major Fraser, who, in conformity with the instructions he has received from Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, is about to accompany his Excellency Fuad Pasha to the Mountains.

I trust that the views I have submitted to Major Fraser's consideration will be such as to meet with your Excellency's approbation.

I have, &c.

(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 11 in No. 271.

Lord Dufferin to Major Fraser.

Sir,

Beyrout, November 28, 1860.

AS the expedition on which you are about to accompany Fuad Pasha to the Mountain may be said to have originated, in some degree, out of observations I had the honour of addressing to his Excellency, perhaps it may be advisable I should acquaint you with the circumstances which gave rise to them.

In reviewing the policy of the Turkish High Commissioner since his arrival in the country, I am inclined to think that there is one particular in which it has been specially defective.

The late events had created grave suspicions that the sympathies of the Turkish Government had been enlisted to a fatal degree on the side of the Druses. Before public confidence could be restored, the impression had to be effaced. It might have been supposed, therefore, that the punishment of the authors of the massacres in the Mountain was the first among the painful duties he would be anxious to have done with. Nevertheless, up to this moment, not a single assassin has paid the forfeit of his life.

Such a circumstance materially stimulates the misgivings of the Christians, affords their priesthood an occasion for continuing their crusade against the authority of the Sultan, and supplies the French army with an excuse for maintaining their position in the Lebanon as partisans in a quarrel which still remains unsettled. So sensible was I of the false position Fuad Pasha thus created for himself, that I addressed to him the interpellation I have had the pleasure of communicating to you. The result has been, that an understanding has been come to between his Excellency and the Commissioners that the sword of justice is no longer to be held in impolitic suspense over the heads of a whole nation, but that those most obnoxious to punishment should at once be seized and dealt with in such a manner as their degree of guilt may justify. This operation once completed, an amnesty is to be published in the Sultan's name, under which the Druse nation will re-enter into the full enjoyment of their civil rights and privileges. It is to be hoped that by such a display of justice and clemency, it will become possible to inaugurate for the Lebanon an era of peace and reconciliation.

In considering, however, the features of this humane project, it must not be forgotten that there are many influences at work calculated to oppose its consummation. It is possible, for instance, that the Christians, who have already taken advantage of the occupation of some of the Mixed villages by the French army to commit the most barbarous atrocities on Druse women, children, and old men, may rekindle their fury on this occasion, and repeat the very crimes for which their enemies are being punished.

It is in the remote anticipation of such an event that I have addressed to the Turkish Commissioner the letter copy of which I have the honour to inclose. It seems to me there is no precaution which ought to be omitted to guard against so unfortunate a contingency.

Another danger against which it will be well for his Excellency to guard arises out of a perceptible inclination on the part of the French to forestall the decision of Europe in regard to the Lebanon, and by dispossessing the Druses of their villages, to accomplish an arrangement they would pretend it would be undesirable to disturb.

It would be well, therefore, that for the future his Excellency should determine as far as possible to forego the advantages of M. de Beaufort's co-operation. The assistance of an European army was accorded to the Porte in the expectation that resistance might be offered to the Sultan's arms. No show of opposition, however, having been anywhere displayed, it would seem to be quite inopportune and unnatural that French troops should engage in what is, after all, a detail of police, to which the force at his Excellency's disposal is more than equal.

Should, on the contrary, an arrangement be made under which it

would be competent for the French troops to enter villages, burst open houses and capture prisoners, it will be almost impossible to prevent pillage, violation, and bloodshed in every locality they visit. It might even happen that, driven to despair, the Druses would hazard a show of resistance—but too likely to result in an indiscriminate slaughter.

Such a wilful exaggeration by the French army of the part they are really intended to play is, I trust, unlikely. But the French General has himself intimated to me his regret at the absence of resistance offered to his arms, and the interests at stake are too vital to justify our disregard of the most improbable contingency.

What precautions may be adopted to avoid this risk cannot be determined until your arrival on the spot shall have acquainted you with the exigencies of the situation; but in my opinion his Excellency ought never to be allowed to forget that he, and he only, will be held responsible for all unnecessary or unauthorized bloodshed.

In connection with the foregoing remarks, there is another circumstance to which I would beg to call your attention. The Commission having recommended his Excellency to adopt a summary method with all those whom he may seize, it was suggested that no accusation should be received unless sworn to before the Bishop of the rite to which the witness might belong.

It is possible, however, that, notwithstanding the pains which have been taken to secure the capture of none but the most guilty, the agents to whom his Excellency may confide the execution of the necessary measures may not be over-scrupulous in their selection of prisoners. Due care should therefore be had that only those whose hands are deeply dyed in blood should be required to expiate the guilt of the nation.

With the unanimous consent of the Commission, his Excellency has announced his intention of terminating the ungrateful task upon which he is about to engage, by the immediate promulgation of the amnesty I have already alluded to. It would be well that this grace should be conveyed in such ample terms, and with such circumstances of solemnity, as may besit the dignity of the Sultan, and command the observance of all the authorities, whether Turkish, Syrian, or French, now present in the country.

As soon as the exhibition of the Imperial prerogative shall have restored the Mountain to its normal state, it might be desirable for his Excellency to invite the French Government to re-concentrate his forces in the neighbourhood of Beyrout.

Some such arrangement is on every account most desirable.

Few things can be more fatal to the internal economy of any State than that the military force of another nation should be held for any length of time in solution by its population. The machinery of government becomes clogged, and the prestige of its authority damaged, by the introduction into its composition of so unnatural an element. It would be as unreasonable to expect the healing process to begin over a wound still irritated by the presence of a foreign substance as that the troubles of the Lebanon should be composed while French agents usurp the functions of the native magistrates, and French influences endeavour to degrade the majesty of the Sultan, and to stimulate the discontent of his subjects.

I cannot conclude without expressing a hope that your experience in dealing with barbarous tribes and the various contingencies incident to an unsettled territory will enable you to afford his Excellency the most valuable assistance in the discharge of a duty which, however odious and critical, may result in the restoration of peace to the people and authority to the Government.

I have, &c.

(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Consul Skene to Lord J. Russell.—(Received December 15.)

(No. 68.)

My Lord,

Aleppo, November 27, 1860.

A CURIOUS document, secretly circulated amongst the Mussulmans of Aleppo, has come into my hands, and I have the honour to inclose a copy in Arabic, with a translation of it, for your Lordship's information.

Although its purport states it to be the production of the Ulema or learned Mussulmans of Damascus, the style and bad spelling would imply that it has a different origin. One might admit the possibility of its having been composed by Christians who fear a renewal of hostile feelings towards them on the part of the Mahometans, and take this means of drawing attention to their danger; but there are indications of its having emanated rather from a European than from a native source, and this hypothesis would give it a more serious interest, as involving the idea of an attempt to justify the adoption of further measures for the security of Syria by foreign Powers.

The Imam Ali-el-Khitab is mentioned without the expression "To him be peace!" which is always subjoined by Mahometans to the names of the Prophet and the first four Caliphs. Ali, moreover, was not El Khitab, which was the patronymic of the Caliph Omar, and such ignorance could not have been shown by any of the Ulema. The word "kullian" occurs several times, and it is never used by Mussulmans. The word "muka-dassy" is applied to the holy cities of Islam, while it is only used by Christians for their sacred places or things. The word "kown" is used in the sense of "because" as it is by Christians, "lian" being the Mussulman expression. The name "Sooria," which appears in the paper, is not used by Mussulmans, who employ the word "Arabistan." In short, without multiplying verbal criticisms, it may be stated that the diction is in general different from that which would have come from the Ulema alleged to have written it.

The manner in which historical events are recapitulated is too concise and didactic to be consistent with the usual style of writing of natives, whether Christians or Mahometans. The document contains passages parallel to portions of Holy Scripture, such as the 34th verse of the 24th chapter of the Gospel of St. Matthew, and the 48th verse of the 11th chapter of St. John's Gospel, which would certainly not be known to Mussulmans, and very improbably even to Christians of this country.

The paper is said to have come here from the town of Hamah, but it is impossible to trace the course it has taken, or in what quarter of Aleppo it first appeared.

I do not perceive any change in public feeling in consequence of its circulation, and I am glad to be able to report that there are at present no symptoms of probable disturbance here.

I have given a copy of it to the Governor-General, who will doubtless take such steps as may seem necessary or expedient under the circumstances.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. H. SKENE.

Inclosure in No. 272.

The Ulema of Damascus to those of Hamah.

(Translation.)

AFTER our salutation to you, (know) that the Christians, from the beginning of the reign of Abd-ul-Mejid, began quarrelling, and piercing and destroying the integrity of the law of Mahomet; and they pass the limits and transgress the obligations imposed on them from old time by the Imaum Ali-el-Khitab, and they have begun in this time to strive violently with the Mussulmans in every matter which brings a curse on them, in the things which the rules of the just law and the Coran-el-Shereef forbid; and

they hurt them in their religion, overturn the obligations laid on them, which Christians ought to obey, and they transgress the privileges of the Mussulmans by sitting above them in official places, and so on. And the great and small among them mock the Mussulmans, and their greatest desire is to treat the Mussulmans on equal terms, and resemble them; and they do not know that the Mussulmans are plotting to uproot them and destroy their race, and that for the following lawful reasons:—

First Reason.—The shedding of their blood, the violating of their honour and property, the burning of their churches, the destroying of their houses, is lawful on account of the abolition of the tribute.

Second Reason.—Many Fetwas from the books "Fetwa-el-Hindié" and "Fetwa-el-Boharié," where it is stated strongly that it is not proper for Mussulmans to countenance the strength of Christians; and that the weakness of the Christians is necessary for the Mussulmans, by whatever means it is obtained, such as the destruction of their crops and their fruits, and stopping their occupations.

Third Reason.—It is not right to honour the Christians. May God curse those who dress them with robes of honour!

Fourth Reason.—The nation of infidels is one nation.

In the sect of Nakshibendi there exist books where it is said that a Christian in an honourable position should not exist; and it is not proper that Christians should be witnesses against Mahometans (but it is proper that Ansaires should bear witness against Christians). And we will quote from the saying of God, "Do not be cowards before the nation of infidels, and throwing amongst them enmity and hatred unto the day of judgment."

Oh, nation of Islam, awake from your deep slumber, and come now, let us exterminate the worshippers of the Cross from these holy cities which they defile, and let not the name of Christian be again mentioned in them. And we have heard from the great officials that the Powers cannot engage in a war, for they have been weakened by the Crimean war. This is the time to seize the opportunity; the time to conquer the Greeks; for the day of their destruction has arrived, for their doings increase in evidence, and if we leave them for two years more they will become stronger than we are, and will take our place and destroy our race; and for this reason we have begun now to show ourselves, and have made friends with the officials; and we have learnt the disturbances which took place in Constantinople last year, which are, first, that the greatest part of the men of Government have agreed unanimously to destroy the Sultan and all the Christians on the face of the earth in our country, for the reason that the Sultan is a man who turns aside from the law of Islam, for he places images in his palace, and his own image is placed on his head; secondly, he hangs presents from the Europeans on his neck, on which is engraven the sign of the Christians, and things like these defile the course of Islam and cause deviation from the religion.

And, two years ago, there took place a secret consultation between the officials and the Ulema and principal Mussulman subjects, where they all agreed to what has been stated above, namely, to destroy the Sultan and all those who adopt his cause, and to place his son in his place, whose opinions are the same as ours, and the religion of Islam will return to what it was formerly, and the Christians will be weakened as they were before, and to break their pride, and, if possible, drive them away entirely from these cities, for if wars and battles arise against us they will be a stumbling-block to us and strengthen the Franks; and now they are exciting the Europeans and intriguing against Islam, and especially in Mount Lebanon, where there exist 200,000 men, for a long time rebellious and known to be in every intrigue, and no one can enter Syria without their help; and how much more now that they are all in correspondence with the Europeans, in order to help their entrance into these cities.

And, having verified this from every quarter, we consulted the Ulema and the officials in order to destroy all the Christians in the Mountain, Damascus, Aleppo, and the rest of Syria, by whatever means possible.

And thus we have intrigued in the Mountain until we destroyed them and dispersed them in every direction; and now the same has taken place

at Damascus, and we have also destroyed and dispersed them. And you also, if anything takes place in your part, do not help them, but turn your eyes away from them.

And answer us, in order that we may instruct you how to act henceforth; and, secondly, peace be to you!

(Signed) Your Brothers the Ulema of Damascus.

No. 273.

Acting Consul Wrench to Lord J. Russell.—(Received December 15.)

(No. 38.)

My Lord,

Damascus, November 28, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to report to your Lordship that, on the 24th instant, our late Vali, Mohammed Pasha, quitted Damascus. His Excellency was replaced temporarily by the Reis Shukri Pasha, who, although so short a time in office, does not give very general satisfaction. It is to be hoped, therefore, that Emin Mukliss Pasha, the new Vali of Damascus, will soon arrive.

The day before yesterday, on the occasion of the French Consul paying a visit to Shukri Pasha, by appointment, he was absent at the Medjlis. After some delay, M. Outrey was told to enter the Council; he was there treated, before all the members, with such marked discourtesy that he rose to depart, giving the Reis clearly to understand his reasons for so doing. On the latter's assurances that no slight was intended, M. Outrey was induced to remain to take a cup of coffee, but would not enter on the business about which he had come.

On Shukri Pasha's conduct being represented by M. Outrey to the Mushir, his Excellency immediately sent for him; the result of which was, that the following day he called on M. Outrey and apologized for his want of politeness.

I have, &c.

(Signed) WILLIAM H. WRENCH.

No. 274.

Acting Consul Wrench to Lord J. Russell.—(Received December 15.)

(No. 39.)

My Lord,

Damascus, November 29, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship copy of my despatch of this day's date to Her Majesty's Ambassador at the Sublime Porte.

I have, &c.

(Signed) WILLIAM H. WRENCH.

Inclosure in No. 274.

Acting Consul Wrench to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Damascus, November 29, 1860.

IN continuation of my report on the passing events of this Pashalic dated the 5th November, I have the honour to report to your Excellency that, in disregard of the order of the authorities that no Christian should leave for Beyrout without being furnished with a pass from the Government, upwards of twenty families have since quitted, overcoming the difficulty of a pass by a small present to the guards stationed at the gates of the town. On the other hand, almost the only Christians that return

are those who have business here; they do not bring their families, and leave as soon as their affairs will permit.

The disarmament of the Damascenes proceeds but slowly, and I am assured that the number of arms collected does not equal that plundered from the Christian quarter, and is not 2 per cent. of the arms actually in the possession of the Mussulmans of the town.

A new question has now arisen in connection with this measure, namely, that the Algerines employed by the Emir Abd-el-Kader during the outbreak of Damascus are required to give up their arms. The Emir himself makes no opposition to this order, although by his manner it is very evident that he considers it as a most ungracious acknowledgment of the services he and his men rendered to the cause of humanity. The case has been referred by the French Consul to his Commissioner at Beyrout, and will doubtless be discussed by the Representatives of the five European Powers.

Under these circumstances, it would be presumption in me giving an opinion on the subject, but I might be allowed to remark that Christians of the higher as well as of the lower classes declare that nothing shall induce them to remain in Damascus if their only protectors in the late awful events are deprived of the means of succouring them in future, the Mussulmans of the town being meantime in possession of the greater part of their arms. There is also another consideration: that the arms of the Algerines were furnished them at the expense of the French Government.

The troops in the neighbourhood of Hasbeya and Rasheya have lately been making prisoners of Druses. About twenty have as yet been brought to Damascus, and since sent to Beyrout. It appears that those remaining in their villages, whether suspected or not, are not molested, but any leaving the villages are immediately seized.

Major Fraser left Damascus on the 17th ultimo for Hasbeya, and has since, at the request of Lord Dufferin, proceeded to Beyrout.

I have, &c.

(Signed) WILLIAM H. WRENCH.

No. 275.

Consul Brant to Lord J. Russell.—(Received December 15.)

My Lord,

Beyrout, November 30, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to inclose a private note I addressed to Fuad Pasha, and his Excellency's reply.

No complaints have been since made to the Consulate of Damascus on the subject; I feel persuaded, therefore, that no cause for such exists.

I have, &c.

(Signed) JAS. BRANT.

Inclosure I in No. 275.

Consul Brant to Fuad Pasha.

Beyrout, le 26 Novembre, 1860.

J'AI l'honneur de prévenir votre Excellence que j'ai reçu une dépêche du Gouvernement, et une aussi de l'Ambassadeur de Sa Majesté, me demandant des renseignements sur les plaintes des Juifs, qui les Chrétiens accusent d'avoir participé dans les meurtres de Damas. J'ai répondu que votre Excellence avait déjà déchargé les Juifs détenus en prison, ayant reconnu leur innocence. Pour prévenir des accusations dénuées de fondement contre les Juifs à l'avenir, je prie votre Excellence de donner des ordres aux autorités de Damas de ne pas accepter des plaintes de cette nature trop légèrement, et dans tous les cas de permettre au grand Rabbin d'assister à l'examen des accusés.

Je n'ai pas besoin de suggérer aux autorités de Damas que les Juifs ont le même droit à leur protection que les Chrétiens.

Je profite, &c.
(Signé) JAS. BRANT.

Inclosure 2 in No. 275.

Fuad Pasha to Consul Brant.

M. le Consul,

Beyroul, le 27 Novembre, 1860.

J'AI reçu la lettre confidentielle que vous m'avez adressée hier au sujet des Israélites de Damas qui avaient été arrêtés sous la prévention d'avoir contribué aux derniers événements dont leur ville avait été le triste théâtre.

Vous n'ignorez pas, M. le Consul, qu'à la suite de ces événements nous avons pris pour règle de conduite d'arrêter même sur une simple accusation les personnes qui nous étaient désignées comme ayant trempé d'une manière quelconque dans cette sédition contre les Chrétiens. Plusieurs Israélites ayant été accusés par ces derniers le Tribunal Extraordinaire de Damas n'a pas manqué de les arrêter pour les examiner. Le Rabbín de la ville a été appelé à assister à tous les interrogatoires, qui ont démontré l'innocence de ces prisonniers, qu'on a immédiatement relâchés. Il n'y a qu'un seul Israélite qui ait été retenu en prison, de nombreuses accusations pesant sur lui et des témoins à décharge ne s'étant pas présentés. Pour empêcher que des arrestations de ce genre, qui peuvent avoir des conséquences graves et tiennent toujours la ville dans un état d'irritation continuelle, se renouvellent, j'ai donné les instructions nécessaires aux autorités locales pour qu'elles n'opèrent la saisie de corps que sur les personnes qui auraient à leur charge des accusations justifiées. Vous pourrez d'ailleurs, M. le Consul, assurer tant le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté la Reine que son Ambassadeur à Constantinople que je ne négligerai rien en vue d'assurer la tranquillité des sujets de Sa Majesté le Sultan, n'importe à quelle religion ils appartiennent, et que j'userai de tout mon pouvoir pour éviter qu'on les moleste, n'importe de quelle manière.

Agréez, &c.
(Signé) FUAD.

No. 276.

Consul Brant to Lord J. Russell.—(Received December 15.)

My Lord,

Beyroul, December 1, 1860.

HIS Excellency Sir Henry Lytton Bulwer made some inquiries of me as to Syria, to which I replied, and I have the honour to transmit the copy of my despatch.

I did not think it necessary to enter more deeply into the subject, as the Commission appointed for that purpose, and now engaged in the inquiry, will, without doubt, accomplish the object of its research in the most complete manner.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JAS. BRANT.

Inclosure in No. 276.

Consul Brant to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyroul, November 13, 1860.

I HAD the honour to receive your Excellency's despatch No. 13, and was glad to learn that my No. 48 was approved.

I think that Fuad Pasha has quite settled that the Hadj shall never more assemble at Damascus.

As to the re-organisation of the province of Syria it is a difficult question, and the details require much examination and discussion.

I have long since expressed my opinion that it should be placed under a permanent ruler not liable to be removed like an ordinary Pasha. The selection from among the Pashas of the Porte of one to be trusted was the main difficulty at the time, and a fresh one has since been superadded, namely, the large sum of money required to put matters on a proper basis, as a fresh starting-point.

To this end a special loan to Syria, secured on the revenue of the province, seems indispensable, for a considerable sum of money is required to repair damage done to property, and to compensate, in part, those who have lost their all, and thus enable them to re-establish their commerce.

Without this confidence will not revive, and without confidence in the future nobody in Europe will venture to make a loan; so that it appears necessary that some friendly nation should assist the Turks to enable them to take this preliminary step.

If that be accomplished, I see no difficulty in restoring prosperity to Syria, and, if such a Governor as is demanded be found, innumerable improvements would follow, which I should hope would place the revenues in such a state that they would suffice to pay the loan in a moderate time.

I think your Excellency appears to exaggerate the fear of exciting the Mussulman population to an attack on the Christians by the severity of the punishments inflicted. An outbreak was considered as not improbable at Bagdad, when the news of the executions at Damascus checked it. It was the same in some of the European provinces, as also at Erzerum. A natural disposition is inherent in the Mussulman to fall upon the Christian, when, from the weakness of the Government, he thinks that he can do so with impunity, and it is only the vigour shown by the authorities in punishing crime that will ever keep the Mussulman within bounds.

I am quite of your Excellency's opinion that, in the re-organisation of its Government, Syria must be considered as an integral part of the Empire, and not as an independent province. It is only on that view that the integrity of Turkey can be maintained: by the admission of any other its dismemberment would have commenced.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JAS. BRANT.

No. 277.

Major Fraser to Lord J. Russell.—(Received December 15.)

(No. 12.)

My Lord,

Beyroul, November 30, 1860.

I HAVE had the honour to receive, at Beyroul, Mr. Hammond's despatch of the 9th November, expressive of your Lordship's wish that I should continue at Damascus until further orders.

As will be more particularly detailed in another communication, I quitted Damascus for Hasbeya nearly a fortnight ago, for the purpose of inquiring into the state of affairs in that portion of the Anti-Lebanon. At the request of Lord Dufferin, I have come to Beyroul, in order to consult with his Lordship, before accompanying Fuad Pasha in an expedition against the Druses. This duty being of a very important nature, and as

Lord Dufferin is at present on his way to Damascus, where all was quiet, I believe I shall best fulfil your Lordship's intention by completing my present duty, as already arranged with his Excellency Fuad Pasha and with Lord Dufferin, when I shall return to Damascus as directed. I trust that this course may meet your Lordship's approval.

With regard to the inclosure in my despatch No. 9, I am at a loss to account for its non-arrival at the Foreign Office, having with my own hands folded and inclosed it, the despatch being then transmitted under flying seal, through Lord Dufferin. The inclosure has not been found amongst his Lordship's papers.

I very much regret this accident, the more so that in my despatch No. 11, I made special reference to the missing document, of which I now transmit a duplicate copy.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. J. FRASER.

Inclosure I in No. 277.

Fuad Pasha to Major Fraser.

M. le Major,

Damas, le 20 Octobre, 1860.

LES personnes qui ont été envoyées ce matin à Beyrouth appartiennent à la notabilité de cette ville, et quelques uns étaient membres du Conseil Provincial. Ils avaient été arrêtés il y a plus d'un mois sous la prévention d'avoir stimulé ou dirigé la population Mussulmane lors des derniers événements. L'instruction de leur procès a duré assez longtemps, le Tribunal Extraordinaire cherchant à trouver des preuves réelles de leur culpabilité pouvant entraîner le maximum des peines portées par la loi et pour éclairer si les tristes scènes passées étaient le fruit d'un complot. Aucune preuve ne venant peser à leur charge jusqu'à présent j'ai cependant condamné les uns à la détention perpétuelle ou à temps dans une citadelle, et les autres à un exil à temps. J'ai fait aussi arrêter toute dernièrement quelques notables qui ont été aussi condamnés pour n'avoir pas fait leurs devoirs de citoyens, n'ayant pas usés de leur influence sur le peuple pour arrêter le soulèvement contre les Chrétiens.

Je les ai envoyés à Beyrouth et de là ceux qui ont été condamnés à la détention seront dirigés à l'île de Chypre, pour qu'ils soient à ma portée, et pour que je les fasse revenir pour leur infliger une punition plus forte si l'on parvient à découvrir qu'ils ont été pour quelque chose dans ces événements. Je vous envoie ci-joint une liste relatant les noms de ces personnes, et le genre et la durée de leurs condamnations.

Veillez, &c.
(Signed) FUAD.

Inclosure 2 in No. 277.

List.

Sheikh Abdullah Halebi, condamné à la détention perpétuelle dans une citadelle. Sa famille et ses proches ont été bannis de la ville.

Nassouh Pacha Zadi Abdallah Bey, Hassebi Zadi Achmet Efendi, Admè Zadi Mohammed Bey, à quinze ans de détention dans une citadelle.

Mufti Tahir Efendi et Khaze Zadi Eumer Efendi, à dix ans de détention dans une citadelle.

Azmi Zadi Abdallah Bey, Ali Bey son fils, Achmet Efendi Nakib, et Farrouk Zadi Abdoul Hadé Efendi, à trois ans d'exil.

Les biens des détenus sont séquestrés par l'Etat, en attendant les ordres du Sultan.

No. 278.

Major Fraser to Lord J. Russell.—(Received December 15.)

(No. 13.)

My Lord,

Beyrouth, December 2, 1860.

ON the 17th ultimo I left Damascus for the purpose of ascertaining by personal inspection the present condition of the country around Mount Hermon, regarding which no certain information had recently been obtained. This great mountain range, a principal stronghold of the Druses, I found surrounded by a cordon of Turkish troops, posted in three camps, occupying the commanding positions of Katana, on the south-east; Saasa, on the south-west; and Deir-el-Kamar, on the north of the range. The average strength of each camp amounted to about 2,000 Regulars, chiefly Infantry, in serviceable condition; besides a small force of Irregular Cavalry.

From these centres patrols were constantly kept up, and night-descents made upon such villages as were suspected of harbouring Druse fugitives inculpated in the late massacres, or of being receptacles for plunder. In this manner prisoners were taken daily during my stay in that region, and stolen property, to a small amount, recovered; the Turkish Commanders, so far as a short stay enabled me to judge, appearing anxious to do their duty faithfully.

The great majority of the Druse inhabitants were occupying their villages; those who had fled to the Haurân, during the move on Lebanon by Fuad Pasha and the French forces, having returned to their homes, with the exception of the more notorious criminals. Yet, a feeling of uneasiness prevailed, in consequence of these occasional arrests, although conducted with the least possible disturbance; and the attitude of the Druses was one of expectancy, but apparently without any thought of offering resistance—at least to the troops of the Sultan. I met some of their principal men, who intimated to me that if any attempt were made to inflict capital punishment on their Chiefs now under trial at Beyrouth, a general rising of the whole tribe would follow. I assured them that if they courted their entire destruction as a people, they could adopt no better plan to secure it: and I believe my remark had the effect intended.

On inquiring of them how their countrymen had escaped when driven out of Lebanon before Fuad Pasha and General de Beaufort, I was informed that they had not passed through the second Turkish line, as asserted by the French, but had passed to the southward between the two lines, whose respective flanks were unconnected in that direction. They thus at once gained the uninhabited and marshy region of the Hûleh, whence they easily reached the Haurân.

One of my objects being to ascertain the actual condition of such Christians as yet remained in the district, on my arrival at Rasheya I called together those found in that village; they amounted to 80 men, with 250 women and children—85 of the women being widows whose husbands had been slain in the massacre. They had received little or nothing from Government for their support, and lived upon what remains of property they could recover, or upon charity.

I called upon the Local Governor to amend this state of affairs, when an issue of flour was made the same day, and regularity in this respect promised for the future.

It being desirable that accommodation should be found for such Christians as might choose to return from Beyrouth, I inspected the houses which had escaped the conflagration; had the roofs repaired, where damaged; and the houses cleaned and locked up, under Government seal, that they might remain ready for use when required. I requested the officer in charge to send to Fuad Pasha a list of the accommodation disposable, which was ample for about 1,500 persons.

At Hasbeya I found pretty much the same state of things, except that the ruin and subsequent desertion of the village had been more complete. The Christian population now numbered but 25 men, and about 100 women and children; six months ago it amounted to 3,500 souls. Here, also, I secured the issue of rations for these unfortunate persons,

among whom, as well as at Rasheya, I distributed pecuniary aid from a charitable fund at my disposal. I called upon the officer commanding the battalion forming the garrison of the place to procure from among the Druses coverlets, beds, &c., for the use of the Christians during the inclement winter of that region, which he undertook to do without delay. I found available accommodation for about 700 persons, in addition to the above-named numbers.

I had much conversation, both here and at Rasheya, with the more intelligent among the Christians regarding their prospects for the future. Those now in the villages seem bent on quitting them, unless the Druses be signally punished, and the whole population, now refugees at Sidon and Beyrout, return again; their houses being rebuilt, and their losses compensated. They manifest little inclination to employ themselves in the meantime, but propose to live at Beyrout or elsewhere at the cost of Government, or by the aid of European charity, and had no plans for the future should these resources fail them. Those who had been staying at Beyrout had evidently been imbued with very extravagant ideas of foreign intervention in their favour. I tried to dispel these, and to induce them to take a more sober view of their position, but I fear with little success.

I regret to add that as a natural consequence of such a state of affairs little or no grain has been sown, and there is every reason to fear much want and misery must ensue during the coming year. During my stay at Hasbeya an order arrived from Fuad Pasha desiring that the Sitt Naifeh, sister of the great Druse Chief, Said Bey Jumblat, should be sent to Beyrout, where her brother is now under trial. This lady distinguished herself by sheltering many Christians in her house during the massacre, whereby their lives were saved. On receiving Fuad Pasha's order she requested to speak with me. I went to her house, when she desired to be informed why she was sent for, and what I would advise her to do. I told her I was ignorant of Fuad Pasha's object, but she must undoubtedly at once comply with his orders, which she did the same day. I now learn that numerous Christians had demanded her arrest, as they now do her execution, on the plea that she was the chief instigator of the massacre of Hasbeya. My own inquiries on the spot lead me to form a very different opinion, which, with its grounds, I have expressed to Fuad Pasha.

At Hasbeya I also procured the names of upwards of 200 Druses, of more or less note, who attended the great political meeting or conspiracy at which the massacre was resolved upon only a few hours before its execution, the meeting having been held after the funeral of a certain Sheikh (Abon Saleh) much esteemed among the Druses, and who had died of wounds received in an attack upon the Christians of Hasbeya a few days previously. These names, by the desire of Fuad Pasha, I have placed at his Excellency's disposal. From Hasbeya I came to Beyrout on Lord Dufferin's invitation, for the purpose of consulting with his Lordship before I proceeded with Fuad Pasha on a further expedition against the Druses, the nature of which is fully explained in Lord Dufferin's letter to me of November 28, a copy of which has been transmitted, I am informed, by the present mail for your Lordship's information. Fuad Pasha has not yet fixed a day for leaving Beyrout, there being a difficulty in securing the passive attitude of General de Beaufort, who is desirous of being permitted to come to blows with the Druses, which will, he asserts, in the simplest way settle the difficult question of meting out due punishment to that people. Whether the desire for an opportunity of acquiring military distinction, or the hope of gaining ulterior political advantages connected with the possession of Druse territory, be influencing motives in the formation of such an opinion, it is hardly necessary to consider—it being certain that such a course would prove highly dangerous to the general peace of Syria, and cannot, therefore, be entertained. Fuad Pasha being anxious to induce General de Beaufort in an amicable way to forego his wishes, has delayed his own departure until this preliminary be arranged—of the satisfactory accomplishment of which I hope to hear to-morrow.

The European Commission, including Lord Dufferin, left Beyrout for Damascus on the 29th instant, it being proposed to levy a heavy fine on that city by way of indemnity in aid of the Christian losses. A sum of

320,000*l.* has been named, and provided this amount be adhered to, and payment be enforced within a limited though reasonable time, I feel assured that the general nature of this infliction will produce a far more marked and lasting effect upon the Damascenes than any capital punishments which have yet been inflicted in their city.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. J. FRASER.

No. 279.

Lord J. Russell to Earl Cowley.

(No. 1,243.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, December 15, 1860.

I INCLOSE herewith to your Excellency a copy of a despatch which has been addressed by Lord Dufferin to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople,* containing a sketch of a scheme for the future settlement of the province of Syria. You will communicate this paper to M. Thouvenel, and you will state at the same time that Her Majesty's Government are disposed to view Lord Dufferin's sketch favourably. They are disposed, however, to think, that if adopted, the Governor of Syria should be named with the consent of the five Powers.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 280.

Sir H. Bulwer to Lord J. Russell.—(Received December 17.)

(No. 812.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, December 5, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Lordship's despatch No. 620 of the 10th November, directing my attention to the letter inclosed in Lord Dufferin's despatch, addressed to me, dated the 26th of October, respecting the present condition and future prospects of the Christian population of Damascus; and I have to inform your Lordship that the Porte has written to Fuad Pasha to give his opinion on the measures best calculated to secure the objects in view.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY L. BULWER.

No. 281.

Lord J. Russell to Lord Dufferin.

(No. 43.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, December 17, 1860.

I HAVE to state to you that I approve the instruction which you addressed to Major Fraser on his proceeding to join Fuad Pasha's expedition to the Mountain; a copy of which is inclosed in your Lordship's despatch to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople of the 28th ultimo.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

* Inclosure 8 in No. 240.

Lord J. Russell to Mr. Fane.

(No. 51.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, December 18, 1860.

I INCLOSE herewith to you a copy of a despatch which has been addressed by Lord Dufferin to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople,* containing a sketch of a scheme for the future settlement of the Province of Syria. You will communicate this paper to Count Rechberg, and you will state at the same time that Her Majesty's Government are disposed to view Lord Dufferin's sketch favourably. They are disposed, however, to think that, if adopted, the Governor of Syria should be named with the consent of the five Powers.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 283.

Lord Dufferin to Lord J. Russell.—(Received December 20.)

(No. 35. Secret and Confidential.)

My Lord,

Damascus, December 5, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith for your Lordship's information copy of a despatch of the 29th ultimo, marked Secret and Confidential, which I have addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at the Porte, reporting a conversation I had the honour of holding with his Excellency Fuad Pasha respecting the course to be pursued towards Khoorshid Pasha.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure in No. 283.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, November 29, 1860.

DURING the course of a very confidential conversation I had yesterday with Fuad Pasha, his Excellency discovered, to my great surprise, a manifest inclination to save, if possible, the life of Khoorshid Pasha; and even went so far as to ask me whether, in the event of that unhappy man being condemned to death by the Extraordinary Tribunal, I thought there would be a possibility of inducing the Commission to intercede for a commutation of his sentence.

I briefly replied that in my opinion his Excellency would be committing a great imprudence if he endeavoured to throw his mantle over a man whose misconduct had caused so much bloodshed, and whose guilt had been so universally recognised, and that it was out of the question to expect that the Commission, or any member of it, would interfere on his behalf.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

No. 284.

Lord Dufferin to Lord J. Russell.—(Received December 20.)

(No. 36.)

My Lord,

Damascus, December 5, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith for your Lordship's information copies of further despatches which I have this day addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at the Porte.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

* Inclosure 8 in No. 240.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, November 29, 1860.

AT the last meeting of the Commissioners the question as to the amount of the penal tax to be imposed on the Mussulman population of Damascus again came under our consideration.

A marked change was to be observed in the language held by M. Bécclard on this occasion, to be attributed probably to the more accurate information he has received from his Consul as to the real amount of the disposable wealth in that city. M. Outrey has in fact frankly stated that the collection of 35,000,000 piastres (291,666*l.*) within a week, as proposed by the French Commissioner, is a simple impossibility. By the end of a month he thinks two-thirds of the sum might possibly be obtained; but even this could only be accomplished by having resort to the extraordinary expedient of ordering the French army up to within a few miles of the gates of Damascus.

My own inquiries have led me to form the opinion that 10,000,000 piastres (83,333*l.*) a month is the most rapid rate at which any tax can be levied, and that 50,000,000 (416,666*l.*) is the highest amount we could demand without permanently paralyzing the industrial energies of the population.

The difference between 50,000,000 and 35,000,000 reduced to a percentage upon income would be as 16 to 23 per cent.

I, therefore, ventured to propose 50,000,000 piastres to be collected within five months as the maximum amount in money and the minimum rate in time on which we could insist.

M. Bécclard expressed himself satisfied with even less than this, and suggested 35,000,000 in four months. Fuad Pasha stood out for a delay of nine months. A long discussion which then ensued was finally concluded by my suggesting that we should adopt the mean of the extreme terms which had been severally proposed in money and in time, viz., 40,000,000 as a compromise between the 35,000,000 recommended by M. Outrey and the 50,000,000 suggested as a maximum by myself, and eight months as a middle period between the four months of M. Bécclard and the fifteen of M. Outrey.

This proposition seemed to meet with general acquiescence.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 2 in No. 284.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Damascus, December 3, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that the European Commissioners have taken advantage of Fuad Pasha's absence from Beyrout to transfer themselves to this place. The project of a journey to Damascus had been frequently suggested by the Russian and Prussian Representatives, but more pressing business, M. Bécclard's indisposition, and other circumstances, have hitherto stood in the way of its accomplishment.

Although my previous visit to this city, as well as the advantage I have enjoyed at Beyrout of daily communication with Mr. Brant, rendered such an expedition less incumbent on me than on my colleagues, I have always expressed my readiness to join the party whenever the majority should have decided on undertaking it. It was therefore with the greatest readiness that I acceded to the proposal made to me by M. de Rehues that we should occupy the interval which must occur before Fuad Pasha could resume his duties as President of the Commission by a joint inspection of one of the chief centres of the late disturbances.

Before giving my final consent, however, I felt it was necessary to

come to a distinct understanding as to the circumstances under which the journey was to be performed, more especially as I had been given to understand that M. de Beaufort was good enough to propose that we should be escorted all the way by a strong detachment of French troops. Such an arrangement seemed to me very objectionable. The expedition to Damascus had been advocated on the grounds that our presence would allay the fears and inspire the confidence of its Christian inhabitants; but for the Commissioners to appear before the gates of the city, hedged in by foreign bayonets, seemed to me an unlikely way of producing a reassuring effect. I therefore expressed my decided opinion that it would be more consistent with international usage, as well as with the requirements of this particular occasion, that we should dispense with so unnecessary a precaution and make our entry into Damascus with such a guard of honour as the courtesy of the Turkish authorities might induce them to furnish. To this proposal M. Bédard, with the amiability he never fails to exhibit, at once acceded, and we have come hither unattended save by our cavasses and household servants.

I confess that it has been very disagreeable to me to insist upon this apparently churlish condition. None of my colleagues took the same view of the case as myself, and I have little doubt but that my objection to a French escort has been attributed to the most paltry motives.

Nevertheless, I can assure your Excellency that I should have held exactly the same language had the troops in question been those of Her Majesty. If I have rightly comprehended my instructions, it does not appear that our Government intended that the European Commission should be in any way accredited to the people of Syria. Our functions are deliberative, and our action is restricted to the exercise of a certain moral pressure on our colleague the Turkish High Commissioner. To surround ourselves therefore by European troops, and with all the pomp and ceremony of a military procession, to make a triumphal entry into a principal city of an independent Sovereign contrary to the manifest desire of his Viceroy, seems to me as great a breach of decorum as it is a misapprehension of the real nature of our mission. This view of the case has naturally proved somewhat distasteful to M. de Beaufort and his officers, and it has required no little composure to meet the eager though friendly remonstrances with which I have been assailed by the French General and his Staff for having induced the Commission to let slip so brilliant an opportunity of displaying themselves to the eyes of the Damascenes clothed in the terrors of European war.

My previous convictions, however, have only been confirmed by these amicable discussions, for I find that even the accompaniment of Artillery would not have been considered by some of these gentlemen inappropriate adjuncts to our state.

We reached Damascus on Saturday the 1st instant. A guard of honour had been sent the day before to the spot where it had been arranged we should encamp, and a Pasha accompanied by several officers of rank rode out to meet us as we approached the city. Our entry was conducted with every circumstance of courtesy the occasion could be considered to require; the guards were turned out, the bands played, and the line of march was duly maintained by soldiers and policemen.

The populace appeared curious and orderly, and sprigs of rosemary in token of peace and welcome were handed to us as we passed along. Nevertheless it cannot be doubted but that our arrival is a source of alarm to the Moslem population, and my own observation enabled me to detect among the silent spectators that lined the streets occasional symptoms of their hatred and disgust.

The town is perfectly quiet, and Christian life and property was probably never more secure.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Sir H. Bulwer to Lord J. Russell.—(Received December 22.)

(No. 839.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, December 11, 1860.

I HAVE read with much attention Lord Dufferin's despatch of November 4, relative to the settlement of Syria, which seems to me to contain the most sensible views as to the government of that Province yet put forward.

But it appears to me desirable, first, that any plan suggested should obtain, without too great a difficulty, the assent of the Porte; and secondly, that no plan should be at once adopted of an irrevocable and permanent character.

It is difficult in these experiments to say at first what will or will not answer the end intended, and one is perpetually liable to get hampered by engagements which experience may show, as they develop themselves, to be opposed to policy and good sense.

If we wanted any proof of this, I should point to the old arrangement as to Mount Lebanon, on which the French Government still thinks itself bound to insist, although that arrangement really is and has proved itself to be an arrangement far less for governing the Mountain than for not allowing any Government to exist there.

My notions, then, would be—

First. That a Governor-General for Syria, with very extensive authority, should be named for five years, the Porte consulting the Great Powers as to the choice.

Secondly. I should be disposed to invert Lord Dufferin's financial proposition, and instead of saying a certain tribute is to go to the Porte, and the rest of the financial resources to Syria, I should stipulate that the Syrian expenditure, placed on a certain scale, should be paid out of Syrian revenue, and that the residue should go to the Ottoman Government.

I could bring forward many arguments in favour of this change, as less humiliating to Ottoman pride, and more satisfactory as to Syrian Administration: but it seems to me these arguments will be apparent.

A certain difficulty occurs, however, here, namely, the pledges as to the Syrian revenue which the Porte has already made with Mirés and others.

This, however, might, I think, be got over.

Thirdly. As to indemnities: I cannot think that this question can be settled in Syria solely by the Commissioners.

I think they should give their opinions both as to the amount and the mode of raising it, and that their views should then be referred here, and the Porte's sanction obtained, or its objections listened to.

A loan would certainly be the best way of settling the matter properly, and if the Commissioners named any reasonable sum, and the Great Powers guaranteed the loan on some fair security, and on the condition that they should control its application, this affair, otherwise so difficult of arrangement, might be settled.

Fourthly. I think if the Maronite Principality is to exist, the Druse should exist also. I consider it would be a great injustice, and an act of great impolicy, to crown the plans of the Maronites, who, it is said, prepared the attack against the Druses, with complete success.

The two Kaimakams should be suppressed or maintained, and some fair arrangement made as to the Mixed Districts, independent of late events; for if the Druses are to be blamed for their cruelty when provoked, the Maronites are to be blamed for provoking them.

Fifthly. I should leave the Commission for six months after the arrangement is concluded, in order to see that it is properly carried out; and my own opinion is that an additional security might be given to Europe by leaving 1,200 troops of different nations stationed at or near Beyrout for a certain period; or by the Porte taking into its pay an European force of

1,000 or 2,000 men, who would furnish a force independent of the passions which, it must be expected, will for a time agitate the country.

I should, however, add that the Ottoman Government would be averse to either of these measures, and I do not know how Her Majesty's Government would view them.

There is one consideration which, however, I beg to bring strongly under your Lordship's notice, and which M. Thouvenel's remark to Lord Cowley makes more imperative.

It is desirable, undoubtedly, that the French occupation should cease; it is at the same time desirable that some settlement as to the future condition of Syria should simultaneously be arrived at; and it is certain that the Commissioners were charged with giving ideas on this matter. But if the cessation of the French occupation is to be dependent upon the decision of the European Commission, it is clear that the term of six months was an illusory one, since that term will have to be fixed by the termination of a labour to the completion of which no date is assigned.

It seems to me, moreover, that though the opinions of the Commissioners may be most valuable, and that their concurrence would be highly desirable, that after all it will be for the Porte and the Powers to regulate this matter, and that it might even be easier for the Commission to arrive promptly at some result on a project submitted to it by the Ottoman Government than simply as the consequence of their own discussions.

I am, therefore, led to suggest that the Porte itself in noticing that the time is drawing near at which, according to the Convention, the French troops have to be withdrawn, should lay a fair and reasonable scheme for the future government of Syria before the consideration of the Governments.

This, if your Lordship should prefer it, might be done through Fuad Pasha; but there are reasons of a delicate nature which might make it difficult for him to initiate proposals, and I am also inclined to think that the Sultan would not like to give him the power of doing so.

If your Lordship is of opinion, then, that the Porte should itself take the step referred to, and that immediately, I would venture to ask to hear from your Lordship, by telegraph, to such effect.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY L. BULWER.

No. 286.

Sir H. Bulwer to Lord J. Russell.—(Received December 22.)

(No. 845.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, December 12, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to you herewith copy of a despatch which I have this morning addressed to Lord Dufferin, on the subject referred to in my despatch to your Lordship No. 839 of the 11th instant.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY L. BULWER.

Inclosure in No. 286.

Sir H. Bulwer to Lord Dufferin.

My Lord,

Constantinople, December 11, 1860.

I HAVE read with great attention your Lordship's able despatch of November 4th, relative to the settlement of Syria, which seems to me to contain the most sensible views as to the government of that province yet put forward.

The only observations I think it necessary to make are, that any plan

suggested should be calculated to obtain, without too great a difficulty, the assent of the Porte, and that no plan should be at once suggested of a permanent and irrevocable character.

It is difficult in these experiments to say at once what will or will not answer the end intended, and one is perpetually liable to get hampered by engagements which experience will show, as they develop themselves, to be either impolitic or impracticable.

If we wanted any proof of this, I should point to the old arrangement as to Mount Lebanon, on which the French Government still thinks itself bound to insist, although that arrangement really is, and has proved itself to be, an arrangement far less for governing the Mountain than for not allowing any real Government to exist there.

My notions, then, would be, first, that a Governor-General for Syria, with very extensive authority, should be named for five years, the Porte consulting the Great Powers as to the choice.

Secondly, I should be disposed to invert your financial proposition, and instead of saying a certain tribute is to go to the Porte, and the rest of the Syrian revenue to the Syrian Government, I would assign a certain revenue to Syria for its own expenditure, and stipulate that only the residue of its contributions should be remitted for general purposes to Constantinople.

I think this would be more agreeable to the Sultan as bearing less the appearance of severing this peculiar province from the Empire, and would provide as certainly at least for the wants of the Local Government.

It would give, moreover, a general interest to the Porte in the good government and welfare of the province.

We are not, indeed, to lose sight of this fact, namely, that having the intention to support the Ottoman Empire, and its maintenance being only possible on the ground that reforms are to take place in its general organization, it would be unwise and inconsistent to base our proceedings on a contrary belief, and separate Syria from the rest of Turkey, on the ground that all that is bad in the government of that country generally is to remain as it is.

It seems to me most important to bear this steadily in mind; for if we discard it, we commence—and on a principle which must and will extend itself—the dismemberment of the Empire as a whole, and the constitution of a variety of insignificant States, which will have no weight in the balance of power in Europe, and be, on the contrary, the theatre of constant rivalries and conflicts between the different Great Powers.

There will be a difficulty as to the Syrian revenue, owing to the Mirés loan, for which it furnishes a guarantee; but this may be arranged by a substitute.

Thirdly, as to indemnities. I cannot think that this question can be settled in Syria solely by the Commissioners. I think they should give their opinions both as to the amount and the mode of raising it; and that their views should then be referred here, and the Porte's sanction obtained, or its objections listened to.

A loan would certainly be the best way of settling the matter properly; and if the Commissioners named any reasonable sum, and the Great Powers guaranteed the loan on some fair security, and on the condition that they should control its application, this affair, otherwise so difficult of arrangement, might be settled.

Fourthly, I think if the Maronite Principality is to exist, the Druse should exist also.

I consider it would be a great injustice and an act of great impolicy to crown the plans of the Maronites, who, it is said, prepared the attack against the Druses, with complete success. Thus, I think that the two Kaimakams should be suppressed, or maintained, and some fair arrangement made as to the Mixed districts independent of late events; for if the Druses are to be blamed for their cruelty when provoked, the Maronites are to be blamed for provoking them.

Fifthly, I should leave the Commission for six months after the arrangement is concluded, in order to see that it is properly carried out; and my own opinion is that an additional security might be given to

Europe by leaving 1,200 troops of different nations at or near Beyrout for a certain period, or by the Porte taking into its pay an European corps of 1,000 or 2,000 men, who would furnish a force independent of the passions which it must be expected will for a time agitate the country.

I should, however, add that the Ottoman Government might be adverse to either of these two measures, and I do not know how Her Majesty's Government would view them.

There is one consideration, which, however, I beg to bring strongly under your Lordship's notice, and which a remark of M. Thouvenel to Lord Cowley makes more imperative.

It is desirable, undoubtedly, that the French occupation should cease; it is at the same time desirable that some settlement as to the future condition of Syria should simultaneously be arrived at; and it is certain that the Commissioners were charged with giving their ideas on this matter.

But if the cessation of the French occupation is to be dependent upon the decision of the European Commission, it is clear that the term of six months was an illusory one; since that term will have to be fixed by the termination of a labour to the completion of which no date is assigned.

It seems to me, moreover, that though the opinions of the Commissioners may be most valuable, and that their concurrence would be highly desirable, that after all it will be for the Porte and the Powers to regulate this matter; and that it might even be easier for the Commission to arrive promptly at some result on a project submitted to it by the Ottoman Government than simply as the consequence of its own discussions.

Consequently, I cannot but think it would be well that the Porte, which has already so many materials on which to ground some plan, should prepare and have one ready to submit to the Great Powers previous to the time that the period of the occupation ceases, so that if at that time the Commissioners have not themselves come to any decision, the Porte may itself, in requiring the fulfilment of the stipulation relative to the departure of the French troops, have a project ready to suggest for the Government of Syria when those troops are withdrawn, and the stipulation alluded to is carried out.

I think it well also to observe that Fuad Pasha might find some difficulty in suggesting, or even concurring warmly in any plan which was not previously sanctioned here, and which might seem to have for its object his own power and elevation. Much jealousy exists on this subject at Constantinople, and such jealousy might be a serious embarrassment.

There is yet another matter, which I venture to bring before you. It seems to me most essential, that whilst the culpable Turkish authorities and the Druze Chiefs are adequately punished, any leaders amongst the Maronites who excited or commenced the recent civil war should not pass unnoticed or unchastised; whilst I am likewise, I confess, opposed to the treatment of the affair which is now under your general consideration, as a purely religious one. To do so will, I think, not obliterate, but plant more deeply and irrevocably, the seeds of religious discussion. Murderers and robbers should, I think, be punished as murderers and robbers, not as Mussulmans or Jews, or as belonging to any religious sect. Indeed, if the Mussulman mob plundered and massacred at Damascus, many of the Mussulmans of a higher order did their best to calm the tumult, and restrain their co-religionists, and give succour or shelter to Christians.

Abd-el-Kader was himself a Mussulman, and no Christian could have acted in a more Christian spirit.

It is true, the populace at the city of which I am speaking were excited by fanatical feelings, or made such feelings a pretext for their disorders, but the misdeeds of a populace should hardly be held as giving colour to the character of a creed or nation, the more especially when it is reflected how many circumstances apart from religion told on the late transactions; that in Turkish history no similar act is to be found; and that Christian mobs have at various periods equally disgraced, with the

name of the God of Mercy in their mouths, the purer doctrines of the Christian faith.

The Turkish Government, as a Government, is responsible for what passed, and ought to have passed, under its authority. Criminals of every class and country should have their guilt inquired into, and pay dearly the penalty for the atrocities they committed; but I frankly own that according to my notions, both on religious and political grounds, I would be averse to make religion the difference between the ruffian and his victim, since such a conviction could only make each feel that there was a gulf of blood between them.

You know that I have not the power to give you instructions; you know also, the high sense I entertain, not merely of your abilities, but of your generous, tolerant, and manly principles, and strict sense of justice. I neither pretend, therefore, to lay greater stress upon my personal sentiments than they are entitled to, nor do I even think that there can be a very great difference between the ideas I entertain and those which you will also have formed; but faithful to the principle which I said should regulate our correspondence, I write to you frankly on all matters, and only attach that value to what I say which I think always belongs to the opinions of a man who writes dispassionately, and from a distance, to one who is placed amidst strongly exciting local circumstances, which are almost certain to have a tendency to bias his mind in one direction. In the meantime the views you will receive from Her Majesty's Government at home, and which of course are those by which you have to be guided, will always serve as a correction to any erroneous ones I may express.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY L. BULWER.

No. 287.

Lord J. Russell to Earl Cowley.

(No. 1,250.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, December 19, 1860.

I INCLOSE, for your Excellency's information, a copy of a despatch from Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer, and of its inclosures,* respecting certain acts of violence committed by the French in the neighbourhood of Bhamdun.

Lord Dufferin's report appears to Her Majesty's Government to render it desirable that the French force should be concentrated near Beyrout, and should evacuate Syria at the end of the stipulated six months, if Aali Pasha and Fuad Pasha undertake to answer for the tranquillity of the province, and especially of the Mountain.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 287*.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received December 22.)

(No. 1,647.)

(Extract.)

Paris, December 21, 1860.

IN compliance with the instructions contained in your Lordship's despatch No. 1,243 of the 15th instant, I some days ago communicated to M. Thouvenel a copy of Lord Dufferin's despatch to Sir Henry Bulwer, containing a sketch of a scheme for the future settlement of the Province of Syria. On asking M. Thouvenel yesterday whether he had had time to consider it, his Excellency replied that he had read it with much attention, and that Lord Dufferin's ideas coincided very much with his own. His Excellency, however, expressed doubts whether it would be possible to engage the Porte to divest itself of the powers which it was proposed to confer upon the Governor of Syria.

* Inclosure 7 in No. 271.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received December 22.)

(No. 1,648.)

My Lord,

Paris, December 21, 1860.

AFTER the receipt, yesterday, of your Lordship's despatch No. 1,250 of the 19th instant, inclosing copies of despatches from Lord Dufferin relative to certain acts of violence committed by the French in Syria, I spoke very seriously to M. Thouvenel, both with reference to those proceedings and to the stay of the French troops in that country, but, knowing how useless it would be to deal in generalities, I entered into some details of what had occurred; and it is further my intention to furnish his Excellency with a memorandum upon the subject.

I said also that, had the reports which had reached Her Majesty's Government come from the usual Consular Agents, I might, knowing the jealousies which, unfortunately, had become part and parcel of all Consular correspondence from the East, have thought less of them; but that, when they emanated from Lord Dufferin, who was incapable of stating anything of which he had not previously convinced himself, and whose whole correspondence evinced a desire to avoid accusations of every kind, I was obliged to consider his statement as impossible of contradiction. I proceeded to notice the conviction which had been gradually forced on Lord Dufferin's mind by the proceedings to which I have alluded. From having been in the beginning almost a warm partizan of the necessity of employing a foreign force in Syria, he had now all but arrived at the conclusion that no proper authority could be restored so long as the French force remained there. At all events, I said, Her Majesty's Government were of opinion that the troops should be immediately brought back to Beyrout.

I have no doubt that M. Thouvenel spoke the truth when he assured me that this was the first he had heard of the events to which I had called his attention, and he promised that if I would furnish him with particulars he would cause an inquiry to be made into them; but I should deceive your Lordship if I were to lead you to expect that this promise will be followed by any result. In fact, M. Thouvenel would not venture to interfere in any matter relating to the military service.

With regard to bringing the troops back to Beyrout, his Excellency observed that they were most usefully employed in the Mountain in re-building the ruined habitations of the Maronites.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

No. 289.

Lord J. Russell to Lord Dufferin.

(No. 46.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, December 26, 1860.

IN my despatch No. 28 of the 22nd of November, I authorized your Lordship, when the proper time arrived, to propose to your colleagues the adoption of the plan for the settlement of Syria sketched out in your despatch to Sir Henry Bulwer of the 3rd of that month.

I have since received from Sir Henry Bulwer a copy of his despatch to you of the 11th instant; and with that despatch before me, I have addressed to his Excellency the despatch of which I inclose a copy for your information and guidance.*

You will observe that Her Majesty's Government see no reason to depart from their opinion that you should formally submit your plan to the Commission, and I have only now to add that I should wish you to do so without loss of time.

I understand from Lord Cowley that M. Thouvenel has informed him that the views expressed in your despatch coincide with those which he

* No. 293.

himself entertains, and it is probable, therefore, that M. Bécclard will be instructed to support them in the Commission.

I am also informed by Count Flahaut that M. Thouvenel shares the opinion of Her Majesty's Government that it would be inexpedient to transfer the settlement of Syrian affairs to Constantinople.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 290.

Lord J. Russell to Lord Dufferin.

(No. 47.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, December 26, 1860.

I HAVE to state to your Lordship that Her Majesty's Government approve the language which you held to Fud Pasha respecting the case of Khoorsnid Pasha, as reported in your despatch to Sir Henry Bulwer of the 29th ultimo.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 291.

Lord J. Russell to Lord Dufferin.

(No. 48.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, December 26, 1860.

I HAVE to state to your Lordship that I approve the course pursued by you at the meeting of the European Commission when the amount of the contribution to be imposed on the Mussulman population of Damascus was determined, as reported in your despatch to Sir H. Bulwer of the 29th ultimo.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 292.

Lord J. Russell to Lord Dufferin.

(No. 49.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, December 26, 1860.

I HAVE to state to you that I approve your Lordship's proceedings on the occasion of the visit of the European Commission to Damascus, as reported in your despatch to Sir Henry Bulwer of the 3rd instant.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 293.

Lord J. Russell to Sir H. Bulwer.

(No. 743.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, December 26, 1860.

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatches Nos. 839 and 845 of the 11th and 12th instant: the first containing your observations on Lord Dufferin's plan for the settlement of Syria explained in his despatch to you of the 4th November; the second inclosing a copy of a despatch which you had addressed to his Lordship on the subject.

I have to state to your Excellency that after fully considering the proposals of Lord Dufferin, Her Majesty's Government have come to the conclusion that they are well-fitted to promote the pacification and well-being of Syria. Lord Dufferin has accordingly been empowered to lay his proposals before the Commission.

Her Majesty's Government would be content to see the appointment

by the Sultan of a Governor-General of Syria. But they would think it a most improvident arrangement to make the duration of his appointment only five years. Your Excellency is aware that the Hospodars of Wallachia and Moldavia used to be appointed for seven years; and that at the approach of the termination of each seven years, the political market was crowded with Boyars, and that the traffic in that market was as notorious as that in the slave-market at Constantinople. Her Majesty's Government do not wish to see the Government of Syria disposed of to the highest bidder every five years.

Her Majesty's Government would be well satisfied to see Fuad Pasha appointed Governor-General of Syria, but they think his powers should be extensive, and his tenure either for life or for a period of ten years.

The Ministers of the Porte ought to be aware that if the massacres of Syria are renewed, foreign occupation will probably again take place; and that no jealousies will prevent the Great Powers from taking effectual measures for the security of Christian life and property.

Her Majesty's Government could not consent to the transference of the powers of the Commission to the Representatives of the Great Powers at Constantinople. At Beyrout the affairs of Syria form the sole object of deliberation; at Constantinople they would only attract attention occasionally; and in the meantime the crimes which have drenched the Syrian soil with blood might be renewed with impunity.

In speaking to Aali Pasha, your Excellency will use language in conformity with that of the present despatch.

As to the remaining suggestions in your despatch No. 839, I have only to say that I think the Commission may agree upon a Report before the end of January. When that Report shall be confirmed by the Porte, a foundation will be laid for the future peace of Syria. But if the Porte is not prepared to take this course, Her Majesty's Government must re-consider the subject.

I inclose, for your Excellency's information, a copy of a despatch which I have addressed to Lord Dufferin.*

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 294.

Consul-General Moore to Lord J. Russell.—(Received December 29.)

(No. 52.)

My Lord,

Beyrout, December 10, 1860.

AN incident has just occurred here which, presenting as it does some features of public interest, I beg, in Lord Dufferin's absence at Damascus, to report to your Lordship.

The Maronite community decided upon giving a native theatrical entertainment, by subscription, in honour of the French General and army of occupation.

General d'Hautpoul having accepted the invitation, others were sent, at the suggestion, it is understood, of the General, to his Excellency Fuad Pasha and to the foreign Consuls. It was hoped that the Commissioners would have returned from Damascus in time for the occasion—a hope, however, which was not realized.

The entertainment took place on the day appointed. The arrangements and decorations, no less than the subject of the piece performed, wore the appearance of a political demonstration. French soldiers mounted guard at the entrance of the house, and a French military band supplied the music. In front of the stage was a device, with the names of the Powers thus grouped—"France, Russia, and Prussia," and "Turkey, England, and Austria;" and underneath, "La nation Maronite reconnaissante." The drama performed was taken from the history of the Caliphs of Bagdad, and was a satire upon misgovernment.

* No. 289.

General d'Hautpoul, accompanied by about sixty officers and Count Bentivoglio, with his Staff, having arrived, the performance commenced with the reading of an Arabic address in the name of the Maronite community, expressive of the acknowledgments of the Christians of Syria to the Porte for sending such a distinguished personage as Fuad Pasha to Syria, and to the Great Powers of Europe for the sympathy and aid which they had extended to the suffering Christians, for which they must feel eternally grateful. The Emperor of the French was mentioned by name, and his humanity, generosity, and power extolled, whilst the other Sovereigns of Europe were alluded to in general terms, as "les autres Souverains."

Fuad Pasha, whom I subsequently met at Count Bentivoglio's, alluded to the subject, and expressed, in strong terms, his disapprobation and annoyance at the arrangements and character of the whole affair, adding that he had made his escape ("esquiver") as soon as possible from the whole scene.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. MOORE.

No. 295.

Acting Consul Wrench to Lord J. Russell.—(Received December 29.)

(No. 40.)

My Lord,

Damascus, December 12, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to inclose copy of a despatch which I have this day addressed to his Excellency Sir Henry L. Bulwer at Constantinople.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WILLIAM H. WRENCH.

Inclosure in No. 295.

Acting Consul Wrench to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Damascus, December 12, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to report to your Excellency that on the 1st instant the Commissioners of the five European Powers arrived at Damascus. It will not be necessary for me to make any remarks on their stay in this city, as Lord Dufferin will already have acquainted your Excellency with the arrangements made by the Turkish authorities for their reception, and with his own impressions on the present state of affairs in Damascus.

On the 8th instant the Commissioners left together for Beyrout, which place they reached on the 10th.

The day previous to the arrival of the Commissioners the authorities received orders from his Excellency Fuad Pasha to clear the Christian quarter of the remains of the fallen houses. Immediately 1,000 labourers and 200 animals were impressed for the work.

The last time I visited the Christian quarter, on the 7th instant, many of the streets had been cleared of the earth which encumbered them, and which was, in many places, to the depth of six feet. The workmen are still engaged in clearing the remaining streets, but it is said they will not, at present, remove the earth from the interiors of the houses. Many skeletons have been disinterred, and the bones buried in the Christian burial-ground outside the town. I have not heard that any valuables have been discovered. The workmen are paid from 7 to 8 piastres a-day (1s. 2d. to 1s. 4d.), which is levied on the Mussulmans of the city.

Since I last had the honour of addressing your Excellency on the 29th of November, three Christian families have returned from Beyrout; but the heads of these families being Government employés, their return was compulsory.

On the other hand, the Christians in Damascus are still continuing to leave, although not in such large numbers as formerly. The Government allowance of 50 paras (2½d.) a-day to all adult Christians is more than forty

days in arrears, and almost the only assistance they now obtain from the Turkish authorities is two small loaves of bread per diem.

At the present moment they are very badly supplied with beds, but I hope, through the representations of Lord Dufferin, that before many days are over a large quantity of beds and coverlets will be distributed. Charcoal is also very scarce among them, although the Government has distributed a small quantity.

The disarmament seems almost to be forgotten; the possessors of arms have either hidden them in their houses or sent them to the villages, and their recovery now will be very difficult. Extremely severe measures must be adopted by the authorities before any success will be attained in the matter.

A few Druses have been taken in the neighbourhood of Rasheya and sent here; no Druses are tried here, but, when a certain number is collected in Damascus, they are sent under guard to Beyrout.

I have, &c.

(Signed) WILLIAM H. WRENCH.

No. 296.

Lord Dufferin to Lord J. Russell.—(Received December 29.)

(No. 37.)

My Lord,

Damascus, December 4, 1860.

I HAVE the satisfaction to announce to your Lordship that M. Ferrette, my delegate for the reparation of the burned villages, has reported to me that he has completed the roofing-in of all the houses in the Christian villages of the district assigned to him.

The consequence of this timely measure has been that the inhabitants have returned to their agricultural operations, that the progress of mortality and disease among them has been greatly checked, and that affairs in that part of the country are beginning to assume a more normal aspect.

I need not say what pleasure I have in being able to communicate this intelligence, and I only wish I was in the position to state that similar activity had been displayed in other districts. A few of the villages occupied by the French troops are in a forward state, but as far as I have been able to learn the general work of reparation is progressing very slowly.

One of the many advantages arising from M. Ferrette's operations consists in the occasion thus supplied to the Anglo-American Relief Committee of striking off their lists the names of those to whom his instrumentality has afforded the means of retiring to their homes. As long as these persons remained destitute of wood, transport, and building materials, it was difficult to compel them to leave Beyrout; but a practical system of conducting the process of reconstruction, once established under the auspices of an active European, it became possible to insist upon their immediately adjourning to their respective villages as a preliminary to all further assistance.

It is perhaps to be regretted that from the first some steps should not have been taken to winnow, by means of a labour-test, the destitute masses that came crowding into Beyrout. So sensible was I of such a necessity that immediately on my arrival in Syria I commenced a little road-making on my own account, and at the same time suggested to Fuad Pasha that he should adopt, on a more extensive scale, a similar method of checking the demoralizing effects of a pauper system.

The difficulties, however, in the way of the application of such an idea seem to be almost insurmountable on the present peculiar occasion.

I have, &c.

(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

No. 297.

Lord Dufferin to Lord J. Russell.—(Received December 29.)

(No. 38.)

My Lord,

Damascus, December 4, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Lordship's information, copy of a letter which I have received from Lieutenant-Colonel Burnaby, giving an account of the satisfactory way in which the work of reconstruction has been progressing in his district.

The statements Colonel Burnaby makes in regard to the tardy nature of the assistance afforded by the French army of occupation, though unconfirmed by my own personal observation, agrees with the accounts I have received from other quarters.

Should the conduct of Colonel Burnaby and M. Ferrette have met with the approval of your Lordship, I should be glad to be permitted to convey to them so flattering an announcement.

I have, &c.

(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure in No. 297.

Colonel Burnaby to Lord Dufferin.

My Lord,

Ain Hamade, December 4, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that it is now three weeks since the forty-three villages of the Great Meten Districts of Mount Lebanon have been provided with shelter for their inhabitants against the approaching winter.

I have also to report that no less than one-quarter of the houses have been permanently reconstructed.

On entering upon my duties seven weeks ago, I found that the total valuation was quite sufficient to bring about the reconstruction of the district, but I have been obliged to re-adjust the detail of the entire estimate; for I found that the valuations of many individuals and several villages had been unfairly estimated. The Arab valuers, in consideration of a bribe, had been induced to favour many; and in order that the sum-total of their estimate might not appear high, they abstained from giving a just valuation to others, from whence would have arisen a great injustice, which I am happy to report has now been set straight.

The difficulty experienced by the Porte of immediately paying the full amount of the valuation has been no slight impediment to a rapid reconstruction. It was in consequence of this that I proposed to Fuad Pasha the following proceeding, which he authorized me to adopt, viz., that the timber required for the villages should be cut from the extensive forests, and that the necessary number of trees should be levied, not as a tax, but in order to prevent speculators withholding them unless exorbitant prices were paid (which they were doing), and that these trees should be distributed, in lieu of a certain payment, to the burned villages.

Thus the bad debt, the payment of which was so urgently required by those who stood in immediate need of it, has been transferred to the proprietors of the trees, who can better await its payment.

By the adoption of this proceeding, the whole of the money that was able to be spared by the Treasury of the Porte became available, without having to employ it in the purchase of timber, which was the most expensive article of construction.

The normal condition of the people, independently of the rebuilding of the villages, has been a matter which I have considered it most desirable to bring about as soon as possible. Therefore, directly that shelter had been provided for them, I abstained from employing the labour power of the district, which I have endeavoured to induce to return to its agricultural and other former occupations, which for the last six months have been entirely neglected. In releasing the people from working at their houses I have not in any way diminished the number of hands, nor the activity required to complete the reconstruction of the villages; I have simply employed labour from afar, instead.

I am happy to be able to inform your Lordship that in many cases I have been able to rebuild the houses at a lower rate than the estimate allowed, and I have received the permission of the authorities of the Porte to distribute grain and seed in lieu of the balance which the Treasury was unable to pay, but which in value, I had ascertained, happened to find itself in several of the Turkish granaries along the coast.

There is a matter I am anxious to bring before your Lordships' notice in connection with the district under my superintendence, which I consider important should be known, inasmuch as it serves to illustrate how little has been the desire of the French to bring about a speedy reconstruction of the villages of the Lebanon, which could so well have been done within the limit of the six months' occupation, had they wished it, particularly with the assistance of 8,000 French soldiers, who, whether serving at home or in Africa, are always employed in various constructions not on emergencies, but as a rule.

When I first entered upon my duties, I found the village of Hammâna, which is situated within my district, already occupied with French troops, whom General de Beaufort informed me he had stationed there for the express purpose of reconstructing that place and its environs. I consequently abstained from interfering with the officer there in command; but I communicated to him that I should be happy to render any assistance in my power, which, however, General de Beaufort told me he did not stand in need of.

I yesterday visited the place in question, and I was much concerned in finding that little or no progress had been made in its reconstruction; and I was informed that the chief portion of its inhabitants were, in consequence, yet in Beyrout.

Now perhaps no village of the Great Meten District presented such facilities. It has good roads around it to the various forests, which are close by, and it has had an intelligent soldiery at hand; and, nevertheless, I regret to state that its aspect and that of its environs is demonstrative of great neglect, and that no advantage has been taken of these facilities of reconstruction.

This delay of making any efforts only confirms in my mind what came before my notice whilst traversing the country south of the Damascus road, where the French troops have now been stationed during the last three months. I there perceived that the reconstruction of the villages had not been brought about in the manner it might have been, had only proper energy been used. The French troops not having been kept employed has, in my opinion, been a serious impediment to the people, for their presence has tended to keep their minds in an excited state, anything but conducive to enable their returning to a settled condition.

I am able to inform your Lordship that, since the villages of my district have been provided with shelter, the condition and health of the people is every day becoming improved.

In conclusion, let me assure your Lordship that no opportunity shall be lost on my part to bring about the speedy welfare of these people.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWYN S. BURNABY.

No. 298.

Lord Dufferin to Lord J. Russell.—(Received December 29.)

(No. 39.)

My Lord,

Beyrout, December 16, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Lordship's information, copies of further despatches which I have addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at the Porte.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 298.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Damascus, December 4, 1860.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Excellency's information, translation of a petition addressed to the European Commissioners by the heads of the Christian sects inhabiting this city.

In examining this document, your Excellency will observe that, in addition to the demand for vengeance and compensation, a vehement desire is expressed in the concluding paragraph that the Province should be permanently occupied by an European force.

I am disposed to think that this exhibition of distrust in the will and the ability of the Turkish Government to protect them is not a factitious sentiment, but the expression of their genuine feelings stimulated to an extravagant degree by their priests and other designing persons.

As the question thus opened up is one of considerable gravity, I propose in this despatch to convey to your Excellency my opinion on the value of the arguments adduced for the necessity of such a precaution. I have already intimated my conviction that if the Province of Damascus is to be administered according to the ancient system, its Christian inhabitants may appear justified in entertaining considerable misgivings as to their future security; and from the tenour of the previous communications I have had the honour of addressing to your Excellency, you will perceive that I am not blind to the more remote contingencies by which the safety of those we have been instructed to consider our clients may be compromised.

If, then, I now take upon myself the responsibility of stating my conviction that, under certain circumstances, the victims of the late outrages may be recommended to put past all fear, and return to their homes, I trust I cannot be accused of a thoughtless misapprehension of the dangers which may be supposed to threaten them. I am thus careful to make your Excellency aware of my thorough appreciation of the exigencies of the occasion, because I have reason to believe that the opinion thus expressed in direct variance with that of almost every European in the country. Nevertheless, I have no hesitation in saying that, as long as there remains in this Province a Plenipotentiary of the Porte, of capacity and courage, armed with due authority, and supported by a sufficient number of Turkish troops, there will not exist the slightest reason for alarm, or any danger that the horrors of the past summer should be repeated.

I am therefore of opinion that the European army of occupation is no longer necessary to the security of the Christian communities of Syria, and that the expectations indicated by the petitioners should by all means be discouraged.

Fuad Pasha is, in fact, as far as the tranquillity of the Province is concerned, completely master of the situation. His name inspires the greatest terror; and the Syrian population are of so vile a nature that fear is a sentiment sufficiently powerful to master every other passion. As long, therefore, as Fuad Pasha remains to terrorise Moslem fanaticism into inactivity, the Christians will be safe.

Successful, however, as his Excellency has been in convincing the Mahometan portion of the population of the risk they will incur by any repetition of their late excesses, he has undoubtedly failed to inspire their Christian fellow-citizens with a corresponding feeling of security. This may be attributed to many causes. Among the foremost I would place the manner in which he has delayed the punishment of the Druses.

To the Christians of the Lebanon the onslaught of the Druses was but an exaggerated instance of one of those periodical calamities which from times past they have been accustomed to suffer or inflict, as the case might be, but in the eyes of the Damascenes it possessed a very different character. Their original position, as spectators of the tragedies enacted at Hasbeya, Rasheya, and Deir-el-Kamar, enabled them to appreciate with but too much accuracy the part played by the Lieutenants of the Governor of their city, and amid the carnage of mountain warfare the connivance of

the Turkish troops stood out to their imagination in terrible relief. To remove this impression the most energetic measures were required.

Unfortunately Fuad Pasha on his arrival inaugurated a system of retribution calculated rather to satisfy the public opinion of Europe than to convince the sufferers on the spot of the heartiness with which he espoused their cause. This impression has been confirmed by the plausible arguments afforded to those who had an interest in maintaining a state of panic by the questionable circumstances under which some of the Druse Chiefs escaped to the Ladjah, and the unaccountable impunity enjoyed by the tribe whom the inhabitants of Damascus had come to consider as the accomplices and tools of their treacherous rulers.

The misgivings thus created are daily stimulated by instances, often true and always exaggerated, of the sympathy and partiality shown by Turkish officers to the Druses of the Anti-Lebanon and the southern plain. Only the other day a well authenticated report reached me that a detachment of Turkish troops having occasion to occupy a mixed Druse and Christian village in the neighbourhood of Damascus, the officer in charge quartered his soldiers on the Christian part of the population, and exacted nothing whatever from its Druse inhabitants.

Another circumstance which may have prevented the restoration of confidence is the distress in which the unfortunate victims of the late outrages have been left by the Government. As your Excellency is aware, not a Christian roof remains standing in Damascus: in the course of forty-eight hours a population of 18,000 persons were turned into the street, beggared and destitute, with scarcely clothes to cover them.

To meet a crisis which would have embarrassed a far richer treasury and a better organised administration than Fuad Pasha had at his disposal, a certain number of Moslems were turned out of their houses, and an attempt was made to effect a restoration of some of the plundered property. Owing to the stupidity or corruption of the staff of officials entrusted with the execution of this operation, it has almost completely failed. It was found that even a pure Christian Commission, composed of the principal representatives of the various sects, could not be trusted with the distribution of the scanty dole it was in the power of the Government to dispense. The consequence has been that at this moment the remnant of the Christian population left at Damascus are destitute of many of the necessities of life.

During the last day or two I have visited fifty or sixty families, and I have invariably found that their supply of bedding, blankets, and cooking utensils were inadequate to their wants, and, in many instances, that the daily pittance of 50 paras (2½d. a-head) was in arrear.

The sense of discomfort which such a state of things entails they naturally attribute to the malevolence of the Government, and behold in their present misfortunes a continuation of that system of persecution which the massacres inaugurated.

Business being at a stand-still, their shops and stock burnt, their instruments and tools destroyed, all occupation is at an end, and their sole employment consists in stimulating each other's fears, and bandying from mouth to mouth the exaggerated rumours of the day.

To these two principal causes of mistrust others may be added, less powerful, perhaps, but all tending in the same direction: the ineffectual manner in which the Decree of disarmament is being carried out as against the rest of the Moslem population, and the sinister alacrity with which Government have taken advantage of it to deprive the followers of Abd-el-Kader of their weapons; the disfavour and neglect displayed by the authorities to those citizens who assisted the Christians during the massacre; the liberation of some persons thrown into prison on the charge of murder; the rumoured return to Damascus of many who fled on Fuad Pasha's arrival; the appointment of Shukri Pasha to the post of Acting Governor of the city; the casual expressions of ill-will which fall from the Turkish soldiery, and similar circumstances which their fears alone invest with a suspicious character.

The enumeration of the above-mentioned causes of continued terror will, I think, both account to your Excellency for its existence, and at the same time convince you that it is an unreasonable sentiment. The delay in

punishing the Druses arises from no feeling of tenderness in Fuad Pasha towards that unfortunate nation, but it is to be accounted for partly by an unwillingness to break with the only native element upon whose valour he could count in case circumstances should place him in open hostility to the French, and partly by a feeling of compunction in dealing too harshly with a people whose excesses his conscience tells him have been encouraged by officers of the Porte.

As for the helpless condition in which the Christians are allowed to remain, it is simply the result of the utter poverty of the Government, and its deficiency in all materials for organizing a proper system of relief.

The ineffectual manner in which the Moslems are being disarmed is the natural consequence of the want of method and the listlessness of those appointed to superintend the operation; while the other circumstances to which I have alluded are either grossly exaggerated or destitute of the significance attached to them.

I am therefore of opinion that, as far as the city of Damascus is concerned, Fuad Pasha and the Turkish troops (upon whom, I believe, all necessary reliance may be placed) are sufficient guarantees for public security; and further investigation has convinced me that, if the Government could be placed in a condition to afford due compensation to the Christians for their losses, and that the reconstruction of their quarter were commenced, a few months would suffice to obliterate the impressions which at present overpower them.

With regard to the Lebanon, if we inquire how far the ascendancy obtained by Fuad Pasha over the minds of the Moslem subjects of the Porte extends to the Druses, the answer is equally satisfactory. At this moment the Druse nation is prostrate at his feet. From all quarters of the country they are sending in acknowledgments of their guilt, and humble offers of submission to any degree of punishment it may be his pleasure to inflict. The presence, therefore, of an European force in Syria is even less necessary to the tranquillity of the Mountain than it is to the security of Damascus. Nay, truth compels me to assert that, each day that French troops are suffered to remain within the precincts of the province, all prospect of a return to peace and order is rendered more remote.

The childish insolence of the Christians is becoming every day more rampant; their priesthood openly avow their desire to throw off all allegiance to the Porte; and the conduct of the French officers and soldiery tends universally to degrade, in the eyes of its subjects, the authority of the Sultan.

In proof of this latter statement I may mention that, no later than yesterday, some Turkish soldiers were set upon and robbed of their arms by a party of French because they refused to give up a couple of Mussulmans, whose white turbans induced these latter to insist that they were Druses.

Your Excellency will doubtless wonder how it comes to pass that Fuad Pasha should submit so tamely to such intolerable usage. I confess his want of spirit is to me inexplicable. I can only account for it on the supposition that his position at Constantinople is so delicate as to render him timid in the assertion of the prerogatives of his office.

To return, however, to the question of the continuance of European occupation.

Your Excellency will observe that there seems to exist, as far as human foresight can determine, reasonable grounds for the expectation that, provided Fuad Pasha, armed with his present powers, remains in the country, there is no longer any necessity for a foreign army in Syria.

As the occupation by a foreign force of the territory of an independent Sovereign is, under any circumstances, attended with innumerable evils, its removal, as a matter of course, should take place as soon as the major necessity which occasioned its entry into the country shall have ceased. Since, therefore, the Turkish Government has triumphantly vindicated its ascendancy over its revolted subjects, and proved itself competent to the task which it was supposed might prove so far beyond its powers as to require extraneous aid, it is now both the interest and duty of the Sultan's

allies to relieve him of a species of assistance which becomes a burden when it ceases to be a necessity.

The immediate withdrawal of the French army would seem to be the natural conclusion from these arguments; but there are certain considerations which must modify, in manner and degree, the execution of such a step.

In estimating the nature of the ascendancy Fuad Pasha has succeeded in acquiring, I have been careful to distinguish between the impressions his policy has made on the Moslems and Druses, and that which has been conveyed to the minds of the Christians. These latter I have described as still subject to a sentiment of terror, stimulated to excess by their priests and other designing persons, but still sufficiently genuine to be worthy of attention. Now, in making arrangements for the return of the army of occupation to France, due weight must be given to the effect likely to be produced by such a measure on the minds of those who have come to look upon that army not only as the instrument which was to realize their dreams of domination, but as their sole protection against foes whom they believe to be biding the time when they can with impunity recommence the half-accomplished work of extermination. So profound is this latter conviction, that many of the richest Syrian Christians have already retired to Alexandria, and almost all those of the better class with whom I have conversed are only waiting to receive the compensation due to them from Government to follow their example.

This feeling of dependence upon foreign protection is not confined to the indigenous inhabitants—it seems to pervade the European residents of this place; and I have been informed that the rumoured withdrawal of the army of occupation has even given rise to a proposal, emanating from the English and American portion of the public, that such an intention should be met by a formal protest.

I do not, myself, attach any importance to such expressions of local feeling. The atmosphere of this town is so impregnated with falsehood and discoloured by prejudice and intrigue, that it requires a considerable effort of the reason, as well as accurate information, for any one to emancipate himself from its disturbing influences; but I mention the circumstance because (the native mind being so prone to exaggerate any impression prevalent among the Europeans) the existence of such an opinion amongst the one will convey some idea of the intensity with which it is cherished by the other.

In order, therefore, to avoid any increase of panic, whether among the Christian or the Moslem population, I think it would be advisable to conduct the removal of the army of occupation in as gradual and unostentatious a manner as possible, so that no violent recoil of sentiment should ensue upon their departure.

With this view it would be well to concentrate as soon as possible the various regiments scattered over the Mountain within the immediate neighbourhood of Beyrout, where they could still be in a position to check any tendency to reaction either on the part of the Government or the anti-Christian element. The publication of a general amnesty which, according to an engagement entered into by Fuad Pasha with the Commissioners, is shortly to take place, might be a convenient occasion for this move towards the sea, as the pacification of the Lebanon once accomplished there is no necessity for their presence in the Mountain.

Restricted to Beyrout, with no prospect of further employment, a change of opinion would probably ensue in the minds of the General and his officers as to the necessity of continued occupation, and the other Governments of Europe would be relieved from the complications arising out of differences of opinion on the degree of risk incurred by such a step, especially as the influence possessed by the French might enable them to fulfil whatever predictions they might make on this subject.

It is almost hopeless, however, to expect that Fuad Pasha will have the courage to invite M. de Beaufort to retire on Beyrout unless he receives some considerable encouragement from Constantinople, and I would venture most respectfully to submit to your Excellency the expediency of engaging the Porte to recommend to him the adoption of a firm and decided attitude in this particular. In opposition to such a proposition,

the French will urge many plausible objections—the difficulty of finding quarters, the inconvenience of abandoning the shelter with which they have already provided themselves, the cruelty of stopping the various works of reconstruction upon which they are engaged, and similar pretexts, in spite of which, however, there remains the one predominant fact that their presence here is far more detrimental than their absence.

According to the Convention the period of occupation should terminate by the end of February.

Whether or not it is advisable to insist upon the total evacuation of the country by the whole corps d'armée within the specified time, is a point I shall venture to discuss on a subsequent occasion.

In the mean time it would be satisfactory if the process of evacuation could be begun and conducted in a gradual manner. Were Fuad Pasha once established as the head of such a Government as I have already described to your Excellency in my previous despatches there would be little cause for uneasiness. At present, destitute as he is of funds and of trustworthy subordinates, it is difficult to hope he will be able to present to Europe such a spectacle of order and good government in the province as it is desirable should have been evoked on the cessation of its intervention.

In conclusion I would ask your Excellency to excuse the length of this despatch; nothing but the importance of the subject would have induced me to trespass so long on your attention. I have endeavoured as far as I am able to convey to your Excellency an accurate notion of the present state of feeling in this country, as well as of the impression which an anxious consideration has made upon my own mind. In appreciating the questions connected with the military occupation of the country I have endeavoured to avoid, on the one hand, a thoughtless disregard of the apprehensions for the future which are entertained by many resident authorities of experience and sagacity, while, on the other, I can conscientiously say I have not suffered my judgment to be warped by the exaggerated timidity which characterizes what may be called the public opinion of this locality; and in conveying to your Excellency the conviction (which more extensive observation is daily confirming) that Fuad Pasha is at this moment able (I will not say to maintain order, for frequent instances of murder and outrage are still occurring in the wilder districts) but to prevent its flagrant disturbance, I am anxious to admit that it is difficult to predict with absolute certainty to what lengths the caprices of fanaticism may yet drive so impressionable a people as the Syrians.

I have, &c.

(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 2 in No. 298.

Petition.

To Her Britannic Majesty's Commissioner.

WE have the honour to state your Lordship that the calamities which befell us, by the massacre of our men and some of our females; the shedding of blood in different and most disastrous ways, of which no similar cases have been mentioned during the past centuries; the compulsion of renouncing our religion; the violation of our females; the plunder of our property; the burning of our churches, convents, and houses,—have been known to everybody either by hearing or seeing. We, therefore, do not at present like to grieve your Lordship by repeating its details, but as we became in consequence in a lamentable state, and are still deprived of our tranquillity from all parts, and as your Lordship has come to this country by royal orders to look into our state, and into the catastrophes which surrounded us, as the crying of widows, orphans, and the blood of the butchered reached the utmost of the world, we beg your Lordship to have mercy on your servants by giving us a perfect rest.

1. We demand the blood of our brethren which was innocently shed.
2. The punishment of those who violated our harems.

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3. The compensation of all our losses.
4. The building of our churches and convents.
5. The building of our houses and other places according to their original form.

6. A sufficient security for the present and for the future, because we have no security for ourselves, property, harem, religion, churches, &c., if no permanent force which we may depend on would exist for protecting us.

We appeal and intreat your Lordship's Government for all here above mentioned. Have pity on us! Have pity on us! Have pity on us! for God's sake.

We beseech the Almighty that He may preserve and protect Her Majesty's Government for ever.

Damascus, November 20, 1860.

(Signed)

KHURI HANNAH ZAWA, Greek Orthodox Agent.

KHURI KIRILLOS FAHAK, Greek Catholic Agent.

KHURI FILIPPOS, Syrian Catholic Agent.

KHURI IBRAHIM SHALHUB, Servant of the Eastern Catholic.

Agent of Latin and Chaldean Sects.

Chief of Old Armenian Sect.

Agent of Armenian Catholic Sect.

KHURI SIMAN, Agent of Old Syrian Sect.

KHURI MUSA, Maronite Priest.

Inclosure 3 in No. 298.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyroul, December 11, 1860.

I WOULD venture to draw your Excellency's attention to a subject remotely connected with the Government of this country, and in regard to which, perhaps, some measures must be taken.

As your Excellency is aware, the exiled Sheikh Abd-el-Kader has been for some time past a resident at Damascus. During the late disturbances he and the Algerines about him, to the number of 1,500 men, declared themselves on the side of the Christians, and were instrumental in saving many lives. This conduct has obtained for him the most flattering testimonials from almost all the Governments of Europe, including that of Her Majesty. But unfortunately the same circumstance has rendered his position at Damascus less agreeable than it had hitherto been. His Syrian fellow-citizens have come to regard him as an enemy, while the eminence he has attained in the eyes of Europe, and the project which has been agitated of creating him Viceroy over the Arab populations, has awakened to some slight degree the jealousy of the Turks.

He is himself far too acute a man not to be aware of the way in which he is regarded, and the feeling of bitterness which such a consciousness would naturally engender, has been further stimulated by the eagerness with which the Mushir has taken advantage of the Edict for the disarmament of Damascus, to deprive the Algerines of their weapons. The consequence has been that Abd-el-Kader may be looked upon henceforth as a personage likely to be both obnoxious and inimical to the authorities. Under these circumstances his removal to some other locality would, in my opinion, be very desirable, and I am almost disposed to hope that his late noble conduct might be considered by the Emperor of the French, a gracious opportunity for allowing him to return to his native land.

As far as I have been able to learn the Emir has upwards of 8,000 Algerine followers quartered in different parts of Syria. This foreign element, if inclined to disaffection, would prove an embarrassment to any Provincial Government, and in the East the means adopted to escape from such a difficulty are often more summary than humane.

I spoke to Fuad Pasha on the subject of the disarmament of the

Algerines, and nothing could have been more handsome than the terms in which he spoke of Abd-el-Kader, adding, that he had offered to leave him a body-guard of 200 armed men, but that it was out of the question to make an exception in favour of the whole 1,500. This is undoubtedly just, yet it is a pity it should be ever necessary to put a slight on a personage so deserving of consideration.

Moreover, I am afraid that unless the Algerine Chieftain be removed, similar occasions of irritation will be constantly recurring.

I have, &c.

(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 4 in No. 298.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyroul, December 11, 1860.

IN transmitting to Excellency copy of the Protocol of the twelfth sitting of the Commission I would venture to call your Excellency's attention to the somewhat unbusinesslike precipitancy with which my colleagues are prone to act in decreeing penal contributions against the Mussulman and Druse communities compromised in the late disturbances.

On these occasions I always endeavour to mitigate, as far as I can, the effect of the violent measures which are proposed in order that justice may not degenerate into persecution.

The collection of 35,000,000 piastres from the citizens of Damascus in the course of a week, as insisted upon by M. Bécclard, is a simple impossibility: 10,000,000 could hardly be collected in a month.

The French Commissioner's second proposal is hardly less unreasonable. As, however, I perceived that the opposition I felt it my duty to make to the summary method with which he desired to deal with the Damascenes had provoked a slight degree of irritation in his mind, I thought it advisable to wait for another opportunity before attempting to induce him to abandon the extravagant levy in kind he has devised against the Druses.

I have, &c.

(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 5 in No. 298.

Protocol of the Twelfth Meeting of the Syrian Commission, held at Beyroul, November 21, 1860.

LE Mercredi, vingt-et-un Novembre, mil huit cent soixante, tous les Commissaires étant réunis à Beyroul sous la présidence de Fuad Pacha, la séance est ouverte à deux heures et demie.

M. le Président donne lecture d'un nouveau projet qui lui a été communiqué par un habitant Chrétien de Damas, relativement à l'impôt extraordinaire dont cette ville doit être frappée. Ce nouveau projet repose sur les bases suivantes:—

On compte à Damas—

13,356 maisons Musulmanes.

7,600 boutiques ou cafés.

58 bains publics.

73 moulins.

22 khans.

669 jardins.

En imposant—

1,000 piastres par maison, on obtiendrait .. 13,356,000

750 „ par boutique, „ .. 5,700,000

10,000 „ par bain „ .. 580,000

2,000 „ par moulin „ .. 146,000

15,000 „ par khan „ .. 330,000

2,000 „ par jardin „ .. 1,338,000

Ce qui produirait ensemble 21,450,000

En ajoutant, à cette première somme, une contribution de 13,550,000 piastres sur les riches dont les revenus sont approximativement connus, on arriverait à lever sur la ville de Damas une contribution totale de 35,000,000 de piastres, chiffre proposé par M. le Plénipotentiaire Ottoman dans une des séances précédentes.

Tel est ce nouveau projet. Il diffère notablement de ceux qui ont déjà été soumis à l'examen de la Commission. Elle est d'avis que celui de Fuad Pacha est le mieux conçu. En faisant reposer l'assiette de l'impôt sur la valeur locative des maisons, c'est-à-dire, sur une donnée déjà connue, et qui sert habituellement de base aux opérations du fisc, ce projet semble à la fois plus expéditif et plus pratique que celui de M. Outrey, qui répartit l'impôt en diverses catégories de maisons non encore établies. Il semble aussi à la Commission plus équitable, parce qu'il frappe toutes les classes de la population Musulmane, tandis que M. Outrey exempté à tort de toute contribution les Musulmans des classes pauvres qui n'ont pas laissé que de contribuer, dans une large mesure, sans doute, au pillage des maisons Chrétiennes de Damas.

Dans le projet de Fuad Pacha, (Art. 4,) chaque individu paiera pour la maison qu'il possède et qu'il habite lui-même, ainsi que pour la boutique ou le magasin qu'il possède, et où il exerce un métier ou un commerce, une somme équivalente au double de la valeur locative de sa propriété.

(Art. 5.) Chaque individu paiera pour sa maison, magasin et boutique, qu'il a donné à loyer, le triple de la valeur locative, inscrite dans le registre des impôts.

(Art. 6.) Les propriétaires de bains, khans et jardins, qu'ils exploitent eux-mêmes, ou qu'ils afferment, paieront quatre fois autant que la valeur locative, enregistrée dans les susdits livres.

(Art. 7.) Ceux qui s'occupent dans une boutique ou magasin de quelque industrie, métier ou commerce, qu'ils soient propriétaires ou locataires, auront à payer, comme impôt industriel, une somme équivalente au loyer d'un an de la propriété qu'ils occupent.

Dans ce système, l'impôt sur les maisons devra donner 21,000,000 de piastres; l'impôt sur les maisons, boutiques et magasins loués, les khans, bains et jardins, 4,000,000 de piastres; l'impôt sur les marchands et industriels, 5,000,000 de piastres. La somme complémentaire, nécessaire pour parfaire le montant total de l'imposition de 35,000,000, sera levée sur les riches.

Ce projet a donc l'avantage de ne pas frapper indistinctement d'une même contribution tous les immeubles d'une même catégorie, comme le projet de M. Outrey, ni tous les établissements ou immeubles d'une même nature, comme le troisième projet ci-dessus mentionné. Il y a lieu de remarquer encore que la somme complémentaire qu'il prélève sur les riches est non moins considérable que dans ce dernier projet.

A ces divers titres, et tout en reconnaissant que les trois projets qui lui ont été communiqués contiennent des indications utiles, la Commission croit devoir donner son acquiescement à celui qui a été élaboré par son Excellence le Plénipotentiaire Ottoman.

Ce premier point, touchant l'assiette et la répartition de l'impôt, étant ainsi élucidé, Fuad Pacha exprime l'opinion que la perception ne pourrait avoir lieu immédiatement.

M. le Commissaire Français est d'avis qu'il faut au contraire le percevoir en une seule fois et immédiatement. Il croit devoir faire observer que les Musulmans de Damas n'ont point consulté les convenances des Chrétiens quand ils les ont massacrés, quand ils ont livré leurs maisons au pillage et à l'incendie. Il n'admet pas que l'on consulte les convenances de ces mêmes Musulmans, quand il s'agit de leur faire payer une somme qui n'est rien, en comparaison du dommage réel et des souffrances endurées par leurs victimes. Et quand bien même la difficulté que les Damasquins éprouveraient à payer en une seule fois leur imposition serait aussi grande qu'on veut bien le dire, où serait le mal? Damas n'est pas seulement une source dans laquelle on puise; c'est une ville coupable que l'on châtie. En la frappant d'un impôt extraordinaire, on peut atteindre une multitude de criminels qui ont échappé au glaive de la justice, et ceux-là mêmes qui, sans avoir pris matériellement part au massacre, à l'incendie, au

pillage, s'en sont rendus, par leur inaction, les détestables complices. Damas ne mérite aucun ménagement, d'ailleurs les délais qu'on demande pour elle ne lui sont pas nécessaires. Il est possible qu'au lendemain d'un si grand désordre, l'argent se soit caché, qui se cache encore; mais il existe bien certainement, et à la première injonction il se montrera.

Il est hors de toute vraisemblance que Damas, peuplée de plus de 100,000 âmes, renommée par son luxe et pour ses richesses, ne puisse fournir d'un seul coup 35,000,000 de piastres, c'est-à-dire, seulement 7,000,000 de francs. M. Bécлар conclue, en demandant que Damas soit contrainte de fournir cette somme immédiatement, et dans le délai d'une semaine.

Fuad Pacha répond que le caractère pénal de cette contribution est admis par tout le monde, et que les Damasquins ne cesseront pas de la ressentir, à quelque moment que la contribution doive avoir lieu; qu'il s'agit seulement, dans sa pensée, de rendre la mesure effective, et d'éviter au Gouvernement les embarras qui résulteraient d'un trop grand nombre de contraintes. Si plusieurs milliers de Damasquins ne peuvent acquitter leur part de contribution, il faudra saisir leurs biens meubles ou immeubles, quand ils en auront, ou leurs personnes quand ils n'en auront pas. Comment le Gouvernement pourra-t-il pourvoir à la nourriture d'un si grand nombre d'individus? Il est déjà débiteur envers Damas d'une somme presque égale à celle de l'imposition extraordinaire de 30,000,000 piastres. Fuad Pacha termine, en répétant que le châtiment pour Damas consiste dans l'impôt lui-même, et il ajoute que la réponse faite par M. le Commissaire Français soulève une question nouvelle et imprévue, celle de savoir si, par la manière de l'appliquer, le châtiment doit être aggravé.

M. le Commissaire Prussien observe que l'opinion de M. le Plénipotentiaire Ottoman devrait être prise en considération, si l'on était encore au lendemain des événements; mais ces événements ont eu lieu déjà depuis quatre mois, et les habitants de Damas n'ont rien fait qui prouve de leur part le moindre repentir. Il est peut-être inouï, dit M. de Rehues, que les habitants d'une ville, théâtre d'événements si épouvantables, n'aient pris spontanément aucune mesure pour les réparer. Les Damasquins n'ont pas même déblayé les ruines des maisons incendiées, sous les décombres desquelles gisent encore de nombreux cadavres. Les ordres que l'Administration doit avoir donnés à cet égard n'ont pas encore été suivis d'effet. Les habitants de Damas n'ont droit à aucune espèce de ménagement, et depuis quatre mois ils n'ont fait qu'aggraver leur culpabilité.

M. de Rehues ajoute que la créance de Damas sur le Gouvernement Ottoman est une affaire réservée entre la Sublime Porte et l'une des villes de l'Empire. La Commission n'a point à s'en occuper. Si le Gouvernement est en mesure, par l'emprunt qu'il est actuellement en train de négocier, de venir en aide aux Damasquins dont il est le débiteur, personne ne peut s'opposer à ce qu'il le fasse. Ce que M. de Rehues, en sa qualité de Membre de la Commission, demande, c'est qu'en faisant appel n'importe à quelle ressource, les Musulmans de Damas soient mis dans l'obligation de fournir 35,000,000 de piastres en argent ou en valeurs immédiatement réalisables. Pour une ville telle que Damas, c'est une somme presque insignifiante.

M. Novikow est aussi d'avis que l'impôt doit être levé sur Damas immédiatement et en une seule fois. Il fait observer que tout délai à cet égard serait en contradiction avec le caractère expéditif que la Commission a résolu d'imprimer à toutes les mesures concernant le règlement des indemnités. Pour hâter ce règlement, la Commission a décidé, dans sa précédente séance, que les Chrétiens seraient payés sommairement, par catégories, c'est-à-dire, par approximation, et qu'une fois ce paiement expéditif effectué aucune victime ne serait admise ultérieurement à réclamer aucune indemnité ou complément d'indemnité. M. Novikow trouve au moins aussi juste que les Musulmans soient traités de la même manière. Si le mode de procéder adopté par la Commission à l'égard des Chrétiens devait être rendu inutile, et le seul avantage qu'il présente, compromis par un système d'atermoiements dans la perception de l'impôt, il y aurait lieu,

selon lui, de revenir sur les décisions que la Commission a prises dans la séance précédente, et de recourir plutôt au système d'une évaluation régulière, qui serait au moins de nature à assurer aux Chrétiens le bénéfice de ces lenteurs, en leur permettant de poursuivre l'indemnité rigoureuse de toutes les pertes qu'ils ont subies.

M. le Commissaire d'Autriche déclare que ses informations personnelles concordent avec celles de Fuad Pacha, en lui donnant à penser que la perception immédiate et intégrale des 35,000,000 de piastres serait d'une extrême difficulté. Il cite à cet égard l'opinion du Consul d'Autriche à Damas, et il fait observer que, si, en accordant à Damas des termes pour le paiement, on pouvait tirer d'elle une somme plus considérable, cette combinaison serait avantageuse aux Chrétiens eux-mêmes. Ce qui importe aux Chrétiens, c'est que le paiement intégral de leur indemnité leur soit garanti. Dans le fait, ils s'arrangeraient probablement de plusieurs paiements partiels et successifs. S'il en était ainsi, peut-être pourrait-on procéder par â-comptes à la levée de l'impôt de Damas, faciliter la tâche du Gouvernement, et concilier toutes les exigences de la situation.

Lord Dufferin croit que la Commission ne peut se prononcer sur le point actuellement soumis à sa délibération, et prendre une résolution contraire à l'opinion formellement exprimée par son Excellence, sans s'appuyer sur des faits, et sans avoir des notions positives sur l'étendue des ressources de Damas. On peut, dit-il, vouloir frapper Damas d'un châtement sévère, cela est juste; mais la mesure du châtement ne peut être aveugle. Lord Dufferin est porté à croire pour son propre compte que l'imposition de 35,000,000 de piastres n'est pas assez considérable; mais il éprouve en même temps quelque scrupule à trancher la question du mode et du moment de la perception. Il voudrait être sûr de ne pas outrepasser les forces contributives de cette cité, en exigeant d'elle un paiement immédiat qui l'épuiserait, et briserait peut-être à jamais, le ressort de son activité commerciale et industrielle. Il voudrait notamment que le rapport entre le revenu locatif des maisons de Damas et le revenu total de ses habitants fût exactement connu. En un mot, Lord Dufferin voudrait que l'on sévisse contre Damas, dans le présent, jusqu'au point seulement où l'on serait bien sûr de ne pas compromettre son avenir. Lord Dufferin constate que, dans le projet de M. Outrey, la perception de l'impôt est divisée en trois paiements, division qui n'a sans doute pas été suggérée à son auteur par une connaissance médiocre de la situation de Damas. M. le Commissaire Britannique exprime en conséquence le vœu que M. Outrey soit invité à venir donner à la Commission tous les renseignements dont elle a besoin.

M. le Commissaire Français répond à Lord Dufferin que le projet de M. Outrey qu'il a eu l'honneur de communiquer à la Commission, est un document que la Commission n'est nullement tenue d'adopter dans toutes ses parties; que, si M. Outrey propose de diviser en trois termes le paiement de l'impôt extraordinaire de Damas, on ne saurait en conclure rigoureusement que, dans la pensée même de M. Outrey, Damas soit incapable de tout payer en une seule fois, et que ses propres informations l'autorisent au contraire à penser que Damas est parfaitement en mesure de fournir immédiatement le montant total de la contribution. Sur le fond de la question, M. Bécclard objecte à Lord Dufferin que l'impôt à lever sur Damas n'est pas un de ces impôts réguliers et durables pour l'établissement desquels un Gouvernement doit s'entourer de nombreux renseignements statistiques. C'est un impôt exceptionnel, établi entre de circonstances exceptionnelles, une véritable pénalité, une composition qui sera d'autant plus juste et plus morale qu'elle sera plus rigoureusement infligée. Il y a lieu en outre de remarquer que cet impôt, quel qu'il soit, ne saurait être de nature à frapper Damas dans son avenir et dans sa vitalité commerciale et industrielle, attendu que les 35,000,000 de piastres qu'il s'agit de lever sur cette ville n'en sortiront pas. Ils ne feront que changer de mains. Enlevés aux Musulmans qui les cachent, ils passeront dans celles des Chrétiens qui les consacreront à de nombreux travaux de reconstruction et aux entreprises abandonnées du commerce et de l'industrie. Les Chrétiens de Damas étaient les instruments les plus actifs

de sa prospérité. Au point de vue économique, point de vue auquel Lord Dufferin vient de se placer, non seulement la perception intégrale de l'impôt et la répartition immédiate des indemnités ne sont pas des mesures funestes à la ville de Damas, prise dans son ensemble, mais elles semblent au contraire indispensables au prompt retour de sa prospérité.

La demande de Lord Dufferin, touchant le voyage de M. Outrey à Beyrouth, n'est appuyée par aucun membre de la Commission. M. le Commissaire de Prusse déclare que, si le Consul de France à Damas est appelé à venir déposer son opinion dans le sein de la Commission, il ne voit aucune raison pour que les Consuls des quatre autres Puissances n'y soient pas également invités.

M. le Commissaire Français se trouve dans le cas de faire observer que la présence de M. Outrey est impérieusement réclamée à Damas, dont la situation ne cesse pas d'être alarmante; mais il offre à la Commission de provoquer, de la part de M. Outrey, l'envoi par écrit de tous les renseignements qui seraient de nature à l'éclairer. Cette proposition est acceptée par la Commission, qui ajourne sa décision.

Avant la fin de la séance, M. Bécclard appelle l'attention de M. le Commissaire Extraordinaire de la Sublime Porte sur la misère des Chrétiens de la Montagne qui retournent dans leurs villages. Il serait selon lui convenable d'imposer aux Druses une contribution préalable, en nature, qui permettrait de distribuer aux Chrétiens divers objets de première nécessité. On pourrait, dit-il, obliger chaque Druse à fournir :— 6 mesures de blé; 3 mesures d'orge; 10 rottolis de raisin sec; 3 matelas; 3 couvertures; 2 marmites, 1 bassine, en cuivre; 1 tapis en poil de chèvre; 1 natte; 10 poutres, ou leur valeur à raison de 50 piastres.

Ce système de restitution a été mis facilement et très utilement en pratique par les officiers Français, dans certaines localités, occupées par des détachements du corps expéditionnaire.

Fuad Pacha répond que des contributions de ce genre ont déjà été effectuées par ses ordres dans la Montagne, et qu'il vient notamment de requérir 40,000 mesures de sémences, prélevées sur les biens des Chefs Druses, qu'il fera distribuer aux Maronites, et prit d'ailleurs d'autres mesures destinées à subvenir aux besoins les plus urgents des populations. Il exprime seulement la crainte que ces opérations ne soient entravées par l'ardeur des Chrétiens, qui, dans plusieurs villages, ont eux-mêmes exercé de violentes représailles contre les Druses, et pillé quelques unes de leurs maisons.

M. de Rehfuès signale à l'attention de M. le Commissaire Ottoman de récentes informations, d'après les quelles un convoi de dix chameaux, chargés de poudres et d'armes, aurait été rencontré dans les environs de St. Jean d'Acre, en destination pour les Druses rebelles et réfugiés dans le Hauran. La vente de ces munitions de guerre étant interdite dans les bazars de la ville, on a pu penser qu'elles avaient été détournées des magasins de la forteresse de St. Jean d'Acre. M. de Rehfuès cite le nom des deux guides qui ont fait la rencontre de ce convoi, et Lord Dufferin demande le nom des Anglais que ces guides accompagnaient dans une excursion.

Fuad Pacha proteste contre la pensée que ces munitions puissent provenir des magasins de l'Etat, et manifeste l'intention de porter, sur le fait qui lui est signalé, ses plus sévères investigations.

La séance est levée à cinq heures et demie.

(Suivent les signatures.)

Inclosure 6 in No. 298.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, December 11, 1860.

ON returning from Damascus I learned to my great regret that Fuad Pasha had invited M. de Beaufort to assist with his troops in the collection of a very heavy contribution which his Excellency had decreed during our absence against the Druses.

I now have the honour to transmit herewith, for your Excellency's information, copy of a note I felt it my duty to address to the Turkish Commissioner relative to the abuses which might arise out of the system of domiciliary visits which would be thus inaugurated throughout a certain number of Druse villages by the French soldiers.

I have, &c.

(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 7 in No. 298.

Lord Dufferin to Fuad Pasha.

Excellence,

Beyrout, December 10, 1860.

AS I understand it is your Excellency's intention to make use of French troops in levying contributions on certain of the Druse villages, I feel it my duty to recall to your recollection the fact that, on the last occasion upon which the French army was engaged in an important movement in the Lebanon, a crowd of Christians took advantage of the impunity thus afforded them to commit upon those of the Druse nation who fell into their power acts of atrocity as revolting as any that had been perpetrated on their own co-religionists.

On receiving intelligence of what had occurred Her Majesty's Government conveyed to me an expression of their very great indignation at results so little in accordance with the objects they had expected European intervention would effect.

In order, therefore, to shelter myself from all responsibility in the event of any untoward accident, I beg most earnestly to call your Excellency's attention to the necessity of taking the necessary precautions against the recurrence of similar excesses on the present occasion.

It is not for me to suggest to your Excellency what these precautions should be, but I may be allowed to state that in my opinion it is indispensable each French officer about to be thus employed should be made to understand that he will be held responsible for all pillage, violation of women, or bloodshed, which may occur in the execution of what must be considered an affair of police and not a military operation.

It is to be remembered, moreover, that these gentlemen are unacquainted with the language of those with whom they will have to deal, that they are unaccustomed to the routine of tax-gathering, and that in the eyes of the inhabitants they are destitute of that prestige by which the native agents of Government are wont to make their authority respected; consequently it may not be unadvisable to warn those officers who are about to undertake a task of so much delicacy that in the interests of humanity it is necessary they should exercise the greatest temper and moderation in the discharge of their unwonted duties.

I have, &c.

(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 8 in No. 298.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, December 14, 1860.

I AM happy to be able to announce to your Excellency that in consequence of a joint representation which was made to Fuad Pasha by M. Bédard and myself last night, his Excellency was induced to send off messengers in all directions countermanding for the present the execution of his decree against the Druses referred to in my previous despatch of the 11th instant.

I propose by the next mail to explain more fully to your Excellency the circumstances connected with this subject.

I have, &c.

(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 9 in No. 298.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, December 12, 1860.

IN my despatch of the 4th ultimo I had the honour of conveying to your Excellency my opinion, that if once the government of Syria were placed on the semi-independent footing, I ventured to propose the administration of the Mountain ought to be assimilated in every respect to that of any other Pashalic of the Province; but that in order to defer to public expectation in France it might prove necessary that the purely Christian Kaimakamship should be allowed to retain—at all events in appearance—some of its ancient privileges. Such a compromise, however, involving the retention of the ancient duality of the Lebanon, rendered the plan less uniform than I could have wished. Under these circumstances I asked permission to reserve to a future occasion the consideration of the details connected with this part of the subject, and subsequent reflection has convinced me that the principle of assimilation we are anxious to introduce might be rendered more effective by an arrangement as likely to strengthen the hands of the native Government as it is to prove congenial to the wishes of the Emperor of France.

By the maintenance of a Maronite Kaimakamship many of the present evils are obviously perpetuated, an unavoidable antagonism is kept up between a formidable sect and a Government, and the anomaly of an *imperium in imperio*, though diminished, is still allowed to retain its awkward vitality. Yet it is impossible altogether to ignore the past. It is true the Maronites are incapable of self-government; yet, however unfit exercise them, it might seem unjust to abolish privileges guaranteed to them by Europe. If, however, we change the word "Maronite" into "Christian" many of our difficulties would vanish, and it might become possible to extend to the entire Mountain an advantage which, if once deprived of its sectarian and local character, would no longer be obnoxious even to the Central Government.

It is with this view that I now beg to submit to your Excellency whether it might not be a good arrangement to erect the entire district of the Lebanon into a single Pashalic, differing in no respect from the other subdivisions of the province, except in the fact that the officer appointed to it must be Christian. By this means two great advantages would be gained. In the first place, France would obtain the opportunity of being able to say that her intervention had extended a Christian administration over the entire Mountain; while, on the other hand, the Governor-General would acquire means of exercising the most effectual control, not only over the Mixed district, but in the Kesrowan itself, by the appointment of some foreign and non-Maronite Christian, in whose impartiality and devotion to himself he could confide. As it will be always in the interest

of the Syrian Government to maintain and to encourage the Greek Christians and the Druses in the Mountain, there is no disadvantage likely to accrue to them by the qualification of Christianity being necessary to the Pasha within whose jurisdiction they will reside; while the municipal and local interests will be secured to them by the creation of Druse and Greek Magistrates, and the institution of Mixed Medjlises over the subdivisions of the new Pashalic.

So convinced have I become of the justice of this view, that I have gone so far as to submit it to Fuad Pasha's consideration. At first his Excellency seemed to regard the proposal with suspicion, and evinced an inclination to prefer the original plan of a Maronite Kaimakamship in the northern division of the Mountain; but I think I have convinced him that, even in the interests of his own ascendancy in the Lebanon, should the government of Syria be ever entrusted to him, it will be better to adopt such an arrangement, while at the same time it will prove a golden bridge over which the French will be able to retreat, without the discredit of appearing to have acquired for their protégés less satisfactory arrangements than they had promised.

In a day or two, his Excellency is to favour me with a reply to my proposition. Should he prove willing to adopt it with real heartiness, I shall have no further misgivings in substituting it for the former arrangement I had suggested for the Lebanon; as a Christian Pasha, devoted to the Central authority, will undoubtedly prove a more convenient instrument for the Government of the Christian community than a Turk. Should he object, the old plan must be retained, as it would be unwise to force upon his Excellency any arrangement the practical working of which he could so easily embarrass.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 10 in No. 298.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beirut, December 15, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith for your Excellency's information copy of a paper which contains memoranda of the principles in accordance with which the plan I have already submitted to your Excellency's consideration, for the future government of Syria, was drawn up.

This document I yesterday communicated, confidentially, to M. Bédard; and I have the satisfaction of stating that each separate Article met with the full and hearty concurrence of that gentleman, there being only two points connected with the subject which occasioned any difference of opinion between us.

In the first place M. Bédard stated his conviction that it would be necessary to occupy Syria permanently by a mixed European force, in order to carry out the provisions I had proposed for its future administration. To this I replied, in a very decided manner, that such an arrangement seemed to me as unnatural as it was impracticable; that, as far as I had observed, a foreign army of occupation had a tendency rather to disorganise a country than to strengthen the hand of its Government; and that I had no reason to believe any such arrangement would meet with your Excellency's approval. The French Commissioner then observed that in accepting the basis of reorganisation I submitted to him there was one reserve he should be desirous of making. According to my proposal the Lebanon would still be divided into two districts, of which the Northernmost was occupied by a purely Maronite population; in compliance, therefore, with Article 12 its local administration would be Christian. But in the Southern Division of the Mountain a majority of the inhabitants were also Christians. Why then should not the whole of the Mountain be considered as a single *arrondissement*, and its administration be entrusted to a Christian Governor, who should differ, however, in no other respect, in

any of his privileges or appointments, from any other Pasha or magistrate of the province?

This idea coincided so completely with the opinion I have already communicated to your Excellency in my despatch of the 12th instant, that I had some difficulty in concealing my satisfaction. I contented myself, however, with inquiring of my colleague whether he contemplated the Lieutenant of the Mountain being necessarily a Maronite and a native. "No," said M. Bédard, "provided he is a Christian it is indifferent to me whether he be Greek, Maronite, or Armenian: let him be any one the Governor-General shall select." Deferring for the moment any expression of opinion, I then took my leave of the French Commissioner, and immediately waited on Fuad Pasha for the purpose of ascertaining to what conclusion his Excellency had arrived respecting the considerations I had already submitted to him touching this very point, and I was glad to discover that his Excellency had so completely reconciled himself to the idea that he had even provided himself with a list of Christian subjects of the Porte who would be competent to discharge the duties of the office in question.

Under these circumstances I shall have no hesitation in announcing to M. Bédard that, provided only he consents to the creation of satisfactory guarantees for the civil independence of the Druses and Greek Christians of the Southern Division of the Mountain, I shall have no objection to inquire of your Excellency whether it is your pleasure I should agree to make such a concession.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 11 in No. 298.

Memoranda embodying the Principles in accordance with which the future Administration of Syria is to be conducted.

1. THE integrity of the Ottoman Empire.
2. The extension of the benefits of European intervention to all the Christians of Syria.
3. The principle of fusion, as opposed to that of disintegration, to be applied in dealing with the different sects and races that compose the population of the Province.
4. The placing of the civil, fiscal, and military administration of Syria on a different footing from that of the other provinces of the Empire.
5. The union, under one Governor-General, appointed by the Porte and approved by Europe, of all the Pashalics of the Province.
6. The individual responsibility of the new Governor-General for the tranquillity and good government of the territory confided to him.
7. The consequent supremacy of his authority over the entire Province.
8. The assimilation of the administration of the Lebanon to that of the other Pashalics, so that, on the one hand, in case of disturbances occurring in the Mountain, the Governor-General may not be able to shelter himself from blame behind the responsibility of his subordinate, or, on the other, be tempted by a feeling of jealousy at his independence to intrigue against the prosperous working of the new system.
9. The equality of the Christian subjects of the Province in the eye of the law, in regard to the tenure of land, the giving of evidence, &c.
10. A mixed army, drawn indiscriminately from the Moslem, Christian, Druse, and remaining races.
11. A police so constituted as that the maintenance of order among one tribe or sect should not be confided to the members of another.
12. A municipal administration, arranged with a view to the self-government, in all religious and non-political matters, of each sect and community. In Mixed districts, the Councils to reflect, as nearly as possible, the proportion in which the separate elements exist.

13. Political Agents of the five Powers to be provisionally accredited to the Divan of the Governor-General, with identic instructions, and the privilege of concerted action in pressing their views on his attention.

14. The abolition of the feudal system all over the Province.

15. Proviso, proposed by M. Béclard:—The Lebanon, in its ancient limits, to form one Pashalic, and the Pasha appointed to it to be a Christian.

16. The individual interests of the now Christian element, supposed to be compromised by the concession implied in Article 15, to be secured by equitable guarantees to be hereafter agreed upon.

17. The arrangements made in accordance with the above Memorandum to remain in operation for a period not less than five years, but to be considered as more or less provisional.

Inclosure 12 in No. 298.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, December 16, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Excellency's information, copy of a letter which I have addressed to Major Fraser, marked Secret and Confidential, requesting him to furnish me with a scheme for the organization of a local army for this Province.

I have, &c.

(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 13 in No. 298.

Lord Dufferin to Major Fraser.

Sir,

Beyrout, December 12, 1860.

AS it is possible that the deliberations of the European Commission may result in a recommendation to apply the principles of de-centralization to the Government of Syria, and place, not only its civil and fiscal, but also its military administration on a different footing from that of the other Provinces of the Empire, I would venture so far to profit by your experience in such matters, as to request you to furnish me with a scheme for the organization of a local army and police force.

It is very evident, that for some time to come, it is on Turkish troops that our chief reliance must be placed for the maintenance of tranquillity; but under the shadow of the contingents to be provided by the Porte, it might be advisable to create an indigenous force, indiscriminately drawn from various tribes and religious denominations which compose the population.

In addition to the regular Native Regiments, a well-disciplined police force would be necessary, organized perhaps on an opposite principle, and so constituted as that the maintenance of order among one tribe or sect should not be confided to agents who were members of another.

It would also be requisite to devise some machinery whereby the Ottoman troops to be quartered in Syria should be exchanged from time to time with other portions of the Sultan's forces, and that this operation should be conducted in such a manner as not only to be advantageous to the Province, but also beneficial to the Imperial army.

I have, &c.

(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 14 in No. 298.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, December 16, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that the Russian Commissioner has just told me that his proposition for the settlement of the Lebanon will be that there should exist no unity of administration within its confines, but that its affairs should be conducted by a Federal Council and autonomous Municipalities.

He admitted that the simplest and more practical plan would have been the confiding of its government to a Turkish Pasha; but, he added, such an idea would never have been accepted by his Government.

It was a knowledge of this circumstance that led me to conceive the expedient proposed in my despatch of the 12th instant as the best compromise possible between the exigencies of European opinion and the principle of Turkish authority being rendered supreme wherever its responsibility extends.

I have, &c.

(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

No. 299.

Lord Dufferin to Lord J. Russell.—(Received December 29.)

(No. 40.)

My Lord,

Beyrout, December 14, 1860.

WITH reference to the statement made to Earl Cowley by M. Thouvenel, as conveyed to me in your Lordship's despatch No. 31 of the 26th ultimo, that the sick in the French army had amounted at one period to no less than 1,500, I beg to say that, from a statement made by M. le Docteur Colmant, Chief Surgeon of the French Expeditionary Corps, it would appear that the greatest number of sick belonging to the French army in Syria that have ever been in hospital at one time has never exceeded 500; this is exclusive of convalescents, for whom they have a separate establishment.

At present there are only 350. The mortality has been equal to about 2 per cent.

I have, &c.

(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

No. 300.

Mr. Lowther to Lord J. Russell.—(Received December 24.)

(No. 88.)

My Lord,

Berlin, December 22, 1860.

IN conformity with the instructions contained in your Lordship's despatch No. 38, I communicated to Baron Schleinitz Lord Dufferin's despatch to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, containing a sketch for the future settlement of the Province of Syria, at the same time stating that Her Majesty's Government were disposed to view Lord Dufferin's sketch favourably, and that, if adopted, the Governor of Syria should be named with the consent of the Five Powers.

His Excellency promised to take the matter into consideration, and inform me on some future occasion of his opinion on this subject.

He requested me to leave with him a copy of Lord Dufferin's despatch that he might study it at his leisure, which I did, seeing no objection to complying with his request.

Baron Schleinitz informed me he had already instructed Count Bernstorff to inquire what were the opinions of Her Majesty's Government as to the future settlement of the Province of Syria.

I learn also from the French Minister, the Prince de la Tour d'Auvergne, that he has been instructed to bring the matter to the notice of Baron Schleinitz, but that the French Cabinet has no particular plan of its own to recommend.

I have, &c.

(Signed) WILLIAM LOWTHER.

Mr. Fane to Lord J. Russell.—(Received December 31.)

(No. 192.)

My Lord,

Vienna, December 27, 1860.

IN obedience to the instructions conveyed to me in your Lordship's despatch No. 51 of the 18th instant, I have communicated to Count Rechberg Lord Dufferin's despatch containing a sketch of a scheme for the future settlement of the Province of Syria, and I have stated to his Excellency that Her Majesty's Government, while inclining to view Lord Dufferin's sketch favourably, are disposed to think that if it were adopted, the Governor of Syria should be named with the consent of the Five Powers.

Count Rechberg said that he should have great pleasure in considering Lord Dufferin's plan, and that he would not fail to acquaint me with the judgment he might form upon it.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JULIAN FANE.

Lord J. Russell to Sir H. Bulwer.

(No. 2.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, January 1, 1860.

THE French Ambassador addressed me the other day nearly to the following effect:—

The Emperor is quite ready to withdraw his troops from Syria at the time stipulated, but if your Government urge this evacuation, remember that they make themselves responsible if massacres and outrages against the Christians are renewed.

Her Majesty's Government are willing to undertake their share in this responsibility, heavy as it is, but the Ministers of the Porte must be made clearly to understand, on their part, their obligations and their risks.

Their obligations are to lend a willing sanction to every measure by which the lives and properties of the inhabitants of Syria may be secured. They must not again show an indifference to bloodshed, when none but Christians are murdered; they must not again yield to the temptation of large bribes, and give up Syria to the extortions of the highest bidder for the Government in the political market of Constantinople.

Lord Dufferin's despatch to your Excellency is, I must confess, less convincing than is usual with him. The impunity of the Druses most concerned in the massacres, the unquiet spirit prevailing among the Mussulmans and Christians alike, the disarming of Abd-el-Kader's followers, make Her Majesty's Government apprehensive of the future.

It is clear, indeed, that the French forces at present in Syria rather increase than allay irritation. But should their departure be followed by fresh massacres, and should European occupation be renewed on a larger scale, the Government of the Sultan must not expect that Her Majesty's Government can ever again express a reliance on the efficacy, justice, and impartiality of Turkish sway.

These considerations are so serious that your Excellency is instructed to press in every way on the Grand Vizier and Aali Pasha that the continued friendship and support of Great Britain depend on the honesty and energy to be evinced by the Porte on this occasion.

If intrigues against the new Government of Syria are permitted with a view to a new harvest of corruption on the Bosphorus, and new murders in Damascus and the Mountain, the countenance of the British Government must be withheld, and humanity will require the most decided and effectual measures.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

Lord J. Russell to Sir H. Bulwer.

(No. 5.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, January 2, 1860.

I TRANSMIT for your Excellency's information a copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Ambassador at Paris,* reporting what had been stated to him by M. Thouvenel, respecting Lord Dufferin's scheme for the settlement of Syria.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

Lord J. Russell to Sir H. Bulwer.

(No. 6.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, January 2, 1861.

I TRANSMIT, for your Excellency's information, a copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Ambassador at Paris,† reporting what passed in conversation between him and M. Thouvenel, on the subject of the acts of violence reported by Lord Dufferin to have been committed by the French troops in Syria.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

Lord Dufferin to Lord J. Russell.—(Received January 5, 1861.)

(No. 41.)

My Lord,

Beyrout, December 19, 1860.

I HAVE already had the honour of stating in a previous despatch that, with respect to the manner in which the Druses were likely to be dealt with, I entertained great fears lest justice should degenerate into persecution. This opinion, I regret to say, subsequent observation has confirmed, and I now have to call your Lordship's attention to a communication which seems to me to merit the serious consideration of Her Majesty's Government.

Shortly before the departure of the European Commissioners for Damascus, a proposition was made by M. Béclard, at the conclusion of a long sitting, to the effect that those Druses who were known to be in possession of stolen property should be required to share their superfluous stores of food and bedding with the destitute victims of the late disturbances. To so humane and reasonable a principle there could be no objection.

Months ago I had urged upon his Excellency Fuad Pasha the necessity of acting in accordance with it, and, before we separated, an indefinite understanding was come to that something should be done towards its general application. On returning, however, from Damascus, I learnt, to my astonishment, that the equitable proposal of M. Béclard had been transformed into the following monstrous project:—

“ Pour venir au secours des Chrétiens qui ont souffert du soulèvement des Druses, chaque Druse à l'âge de participer aux contributions devra donner—

	Piastres.
10 mids de blé	200
10 mids d'orge	120
10 rotelles raisins secs	40
1 mid de porri [?]	20
3 matelats	120
3 couvertures de lit	105
3 coussines	60
2 marmites	100
1 chaudron	150
2 tapis	100
10 couffes	50
	1,065—

To be contributed within the space of five days, in money or in kind, on every Druse above the age of fifteen, under pain of a military execution being put into his house. The credit of this scheme rests, I understand, with M. Portalis, the gentleman whom I have already had occasion to signalize to your Lordship as having so grossly misconducted the mission on which he seems to have been somewhat irregularly sent by the General of the French army of occupation to certain of the Mixed villages.

One would have thought that the violence and indiscretion he exhibited on that occasion would have prevented this person from ever afterwards becoming the source of important inspirations, and it is much to be regretted that he should continue to enjoy the confidence of those whose decisions have any influence on the march of events in this country.

In examining the above edict, in detail, it is difficult to know whether to be indignant at its cruelty or to laugh at its folly. To suppose that each male member of a Druse family above fifteen is in a position to produce three beds and mattresses is simply absurd; the cauldron put down at 150 piastres is a rare article of household furniture, even among the less indigent classes, and the Christians themselves never possessed the one-hundredth part of the number it is proposed should be restored to them by the Druses, while the injustice of requiring each individual, no matter what his relative means may be, to pay a uniform contribution, is so flagrant as to need no comment.

In order, however, that your Lordship may more exactly appreciate the terrible severity of the measure with which the Druse nation is about to be visited, I will adopt a method of comparison which will cause the extravagance of its provisions to stand out in due relief.

The European Commission has recommended, that in addition to the capital punishment which has fallen on the principal promoters of the massacres of Damascus, the whole Mahometan population shall be visited with a penal tax. The forced contribution to be levied on the Druses may be regarded in all respects as an analogous measure; for although, as yet, no Druse Chief has suffered, eleven of their principal Sheikhs are now on trial for their lives, and Fuad Pasha has been just furnished by the Christians of the Mountain with a list of 4,000 persons, whose blood they have demanded on oath before their Bishops. The impost assessed upon the rich city of Damascus may, therefore, be fairly taken as a standard in gauging the proportional amount to be required of the needy peasantry of the Mountain.

40,000,000 of piastres is the sum which Damascus has been required to pay. Its Mahometan population is reckoned at 125,000 souls; of these 35,000 at least would be males above fifteen years of age, and a tax of 40,000,000 of piastres distributed over 35,000 persons would amount to 1,142 piastres a-piece. Now the sum required of every Druse tax-payer—that is, of every Druse above the age of fifteen—is 1,065 piastres. Consequently the unfortunate peasants of the Lebanon are required to pay up within five days almost as large a sum as is demanded from the citizens of Damascus within five months.

But this is not all. In yet another respect this iniquitous scheme will tell more severely against the Druses than against the Damascenes. Of all the plunder taken from the rich Christians of that city scarcely anything of value has been restored. The pillagers will remain for the most part in possession of the stolen property, and their ill-gotten gains will doubtless help to pay the penal tax; but, as your Lordship will perceive by the lists which I inclose, a vast amount of plunder has been already recovered from the Druses, and more will probably be yet obtained.

Moreover, in the distribution of the tax over the citizens of Damascus, thanks to the intelligence and justice of the French Consul M. Outrey, care has been taken that its chief burden shall fall upon the rich, while a large proportion of the indigent classes have been suffered to go scot-free; but in the case of the Druses the possessions of the Sheikhs and of the richest members of the nation have been removed by sequestration from all liability to the impost, and it is upon the poorer classes alone that its whole weight is intended to fall. It must also be remembered that for the last three months, while the Damascenes have been dwelling in perfect security, except from the visitation of legal authority, the Druses have been leading a miserable life, exposed to perpetual molestation, numbers of them (certainly more than forty) have been murdered, their women have been insulted, eighteen or nineteen of their villages have been pillaged

(twelve totally and seven partially). Much of their corn—many of their beasts have been unjustly confiscated, acorns and bran have become their daily food in many districts, and the whole nation has been deprived of its political privileges. When, therefore, on returning from Damascus it appeared that in addition to what they had already suffered—in addition to the forfeiture of their independence—in addition to the capital punishment impending over them, a plan had been devised to accomplish the indiscriminate ruin of the whole nation, I felt an occasion had arisen when the most energetic interference was required.

Fortunately, I possess in M. Béclard a colleague on whose sense of justice and conciliatory disposition I can always rely. No sooner was this gentleman made acquainted with the grave nature of the crisis than he at once agreed to assist me in forestalling it. But time pressed; it was already 8 o'clock on Thursday evening, and a simultaneous execution of the obnoxious edict, all over the Mountain, was to commence at daylight the next morning. Armed with a written remonstrance from the French Commissioner, I repaired to Fuad Pasha, and his Excellency consented to our joint representation.

A letter was written to the French General Ducrot, commanding in the absence of M. de Beaufort. Counter-orders were despatched at midnight to the various centres of action, enjoining a suspension of the operation until further orders, and it was agreed to refer the whole subject to the reconsideration of the next meeting of the European Commission.

It is my intention to take advantage of this opportunity to urge upon my colleagues, and more especially upon his Excellency Fuad Pasha the necessity of acting with greater caution when dealing with the vital interests of our fellow-creatures. Taxes, forced contributions, &c., must not be decreed at hap-hazard, without the faintest appreciation of the resources of the contributors, still less at the instigation of some violent unscrupulous individual, whose previous conduct ought to be sufficient to deprive his opinion of all authority.

Above all things, I shall protest in the name of Her Majesty's Government, and in that of common humanity, against the Druses being visited with a severer measure of punishment than has been considered sufficient for the Damascenes.

As to the comparative culpability of these two communities there can be no difference of opinion. The Damascenes are simply fanatical assassins: but let passion and prejudice gloze the matter as they may, it must remain an indisputable fact that it was by the intrigues and menaces of their Christian enemies that the Druses were first driven into war; it was through the encouragement of their Mahometan superiors that their native ferocity was stimulated into the excesses which disgraced their victory. This is the truth, and it cannot be gainsaid.

For months beforehand, the calamity was impending. When I was last in the country, the sentiments which animated either tribe were notorious. The Druses did not want to fight; the Maronites thought their hour of victory was come.

Custom-house returns can prove that upwards of 120,000 stand of arms and 20,000 pistols were imported into the Lebanon between January 1857 and the spring of 1860, while the sinister influence exercised by Bishop Tobia and his associates was so universally recognised that his withdrawal from Beyrout was insisted upon by the French Consul, as a necessary preliminary to all chance of peace. It is true his Eminence asserted on that occasion that nothing could be proved against him, for he had not committed himself to paper, but this very observation is sufficiently significative of the part he had been playing. One letter at least exists (perhaps others may be forthcoming) in which the prelate writes before the outbreak in very inflammatory terms to the people of Deir-el Kamar, and openly talks of the expulsion of the Druses.

Under these circumstances, it is idle to speak of the Christians as if they were saintly martyrs. They are as savage and bloodthirsty in their traditional warfare as any of their pagan neighbours. Nay, their clans often carry on internecine blood-feuds with one another, in which they do not even spare the womankind. An instance of such strife occurred but two years ago, in the case of the Hayin Sheikhs, and similar occurrences are frequent in their history. In this respect, at least, the Druses are the more humane; they never war on one another, and women are sacred in their eyes.

To depict, therefore, the quarrel between the Druses and the Maronites as an onslaught of savage heathens on the inoffensive followers of Christ's religion,

is a simple misrepresentation. It was a feud between two equally barbarous tribes, in which the victors inflicted on their enemies the fate with which they themselves had been threatened. If the contest was distinguished by circumstances of more than usual brutality, it is to be attributed to the interference of the Turks, and the intensity of the hatred which the previous threats and arrogance of the Christians had provoked. In their day of triumph, these last have not proved themselves a whit less bloodthirsty than their enemies. Only yesterday, Fuad Pasha received, through the bishops of their communities, a demand for the heads of 4,500 persons, that is, the whole tax-paying Druse population of the Lebanon.

By the tenour of my previous despatches, your Lordship will have perceived that I am very far from seeking to extenuate the atrocity of the crimes committed by the Druses at Hasbeya, Rasheya, and Deir-el-Kamar: I consider that Fuad Pasha has been much to blame in so long delaying their chastisement. In the interests of justice, of humanity, and of the future government of the Province, it is necessary that a great example should be made of those whose hands are deepest dyed in blood. It is only by the severity of punishment that these barbarians can be made to comprehend the enormity of their crimes; but an awful and impartial administration of capital punishment, on a certain number of notorious offenders, is a far different thing from that stupid and unscrupulous system of persecution by which the whole nation is being driven to despair.

From all complicity in such a course, I, for one, am determined to stand aloof. Having done my best, as far as my abilities enabled me, to plead the cause of truth and mercy on the spot, I shall leave the rest in your Lordship's hands, content with the conviction that, whatever happens, the opinions I have ventured to record will remain to prove that I have endeavoured to prevent the commission of a gross injustice.

I beg to subjoin a statement forwarded to me by Vice-Consul Rogers as to the present destitute condition of a large portion of the Druse population, as well as a copy of a petition from certain Druse communities.

Your Lordship may place full reliance in the truth of Mr. Rogers' assertions, they have been confirmed in every particular by the testimony of American missionaries and French silk-spinners, and of other persons in a position to form an opinion.

The Druse petition speaks for itself; a people weary of their lives, ask leave to escape anywhere under the sun from the intolerable persecution which pursues them.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

P.S.—In order to give as much effect as possible to the opinions expressed in the above despatch, I propose to communicate it to my colleagues, and to the French General.

D. AND C.

Inclosure 1 in No. 305.

List of Plundered Articles recovered and distributed by the Turkish Government.

Collected from fifty-three villages in the district of Mokhtarah:—

1,180 beds, 1,354 lehafs, 3,946 articles of clothing, 1,409 articles in copper, 798 animals.

List of articles collected in the Shuf:—

98 cups and cupstands (gold and silver), 9 silver spoons, 21 censers, 19 crosses, 3 strings of pearls, 16 cases or small boxes, 7 stars with pearls or diamonds, 10 chains, 8 swords, cases or handles, 16 clerical crowns, 3 ornamented gold bands, 2 tantureh (Druse women's horns), 1 hatchet, 1 double-barrelled gun, 1 large pistol, 1 silver coffee-pot, 1 silver perfume-pot, 1 large curtain wrought in silver, 23 necklaces, 120 gold and silver balls, 23 earrings, some with diamonds, 10 hair-pins, 21 buckles, 501 gold and silver buttons, 4 silver candlesticks, 51 silver lamps, 15 silver trays, 4 old bottles, 20 bracelets, 2 silver armlets, 7 watches, 4 silver-mounted halters, 4 pictures, 14 women's head dresses (in gold and silver),

30 women's head dresses for the back, 26 coffee-cup holders (zarfs), 7 rings (silver and gold, one diamond), 2 rich vests, 1 ebony inkstand, 1 silver comb, 1 mounted staff, 1 thimble, 1 crescent, 529 lots of broken silver and gold articles, 3,074 piastres in money attached to head-dresses, 139,794 piastres, collected on account of animals, wheat, silk, &c., &c., destroyed or consumed.

Articles collected from the district of Elkhanib:—

126 beds, 145 lehafs, 70 articles of clothing, 23 copper utensils, 106 animals.

1,035½ mids of wheat were distributed among 2,770 distressed Christian inhabitants of the same district; also, 50 mids were given to the monks of Deir-el-Mokhallis.

Inclosure 2 in No. 305.

Vice-Consul Rogers to Lord Dufferin.

My Lord,

Beyrout, December 17, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to report that from positive information received, and from personal observation in Mount Lebanon of the actual state of the Druses. I am convinced that the collection of the forced contribution, as proposed in his Excellency Fuad Pasha's notice, is utterly impracticable.

1. The Druses have, in many instances, lost as much as the Christians by the sequel of the late civil war. The Christians who were rendered homeless have been well cared for by the various Relief Committees established for their benefit, and this charity has not been available for the Druses.

2. There are at least seven villages, viz., Ain Anub, Ainab B'shetfin, Kefraya, Kefr Takud, Kefr Nabrah, and Baklun, and I believe several others of which I have not obtained the names, that were utterly pillaged by the French soldiers or the Christian followers of the French camp.

3. The booty found in the Mixed, or in the purely Druse villages, has been recovered by French or Turkish military, and there are numerous instances of people having been deprived of large quantities of their own property also.

4. A large proportion of the wheat and barley grown in the plain of Bekaa belongs to the Druses of Mount Lebanon, and this has been confiscated by Government, and even the oxen used for agricultural purposes have been seized, and some of them killed for the consumption of the French troops. Many of the higher classes of Druses have thus been entirely without corn this year, although accustomed to house very large quantities every year of their own cultivation.

5. The Druses not being allowed to communicate with Beyrout, or any other large town, are not in a position to enter into any arrangement for the borrowing of money, or for the sale of any property which might enable them to pay the demands of Government. They are obliged to depend upon Christians for the purchase of their daily food, who make them pay a very heavy per-centage for the favour conferred. The higher classes are able to submit to this imposition; but the middle and poorer classes have not the means, and they are living on the refuse of the former, making bread of acorn flour and bran, or anything else they can procure, such as the specimen I had the honour of showing your Lordship on my last return from the Mountain. The women wander about the hills collecting herbs, which form a principal part of their present food. And in the case of villages which have been pillaged as above referred to, even those who have been accustomed to comparative luxury are reduced to the same sort of semi-starvation.

It is well known that the natives of this country are in the habit of borrowing money every year on account of the next year's harvest, and the Druses having been in a great measure deprived of their harvest this year, they are neither able to pay their debts nor to borrow more upon the security of that of next year; and what is more, the confiscation of the oxen renders them incapable of ploughing, and renders their future even more sad than their present state.

The amount demanded by the Government at present, is 1,065 piastres from every taxable Druse, viz., every male above the age of fifteen years. This, under the most favourable circumstances, is a very heavy tax upon any of the natives of this country, whose wants are so few, and who, according to the best estimates, consume on an average from 2,000 to 2,200 piastres a year per

family, so that the amount thus demanded from each man would equal the annual consumption of half a family.

I have, &c.
(Signed) E. T. ROGERS.

Inclosure 3 in No. 305.

Petition.

(Traduction)

NOUS Soussignés, sujets de la Sublime Porte, habitants dans le district du Jurd dépendant de Deir-el-Kamar, prions Dieu de conserver à jamais la vie de Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan, qui a daigné envoyer votre Excellence pour rendre justice à ses sujets. [Nous ?] avons grand espoir en vous d'acquiescer la sûreté et la tranquillité désirée, parceque grâce à Dieu il n'y a pas eu du sang versé chez nous, pas une maison Chrétienne brûlée; tandis que les Chrétiens nous ont quitté, abandonné leurs familles pour nous faire la guerre, nous avons sauvé leurs familles, leurs biens, sans qu'ils aient perdu une piastre.

Il y a eu les mauvais sujets qui ont quitté notre district pour aller piller. Ceux-là d'après les ordres nous avons fait restituer le pillage.

Maintenant nous venons d'avoir l'honneur de recevoir de nouvelles ordres de votre Excellence que tout Druse payant l'impôt doit fournir à la nation Chrétienne blé 10 mids, orge 10, raisins secs 10 rottols, matelats 3, couvertures 3, coussins 3, pots de cuivre 2, marmites 2, tapis et couffes. Celui qui n'en a pas ces objets doit donner la valeur argent comptant 1,065 piastres.

En tout cas nous serons toujours obéissant aux ordres de votre Excellence non pas pour l'argent mais pour verser notre sang; seulement nous ne pouvons pas supporter cette demande, parceque nous n'avons rien. Créatures de Dieu nous nous jetons à vos pieds vous priant d'avoir compassion de nous. Prêt à quitter nos pays, nous soumettrons tout ce que nous possédons, et en chemises nous irons habiter où la Sublime Porte nous l'ordonnera ou bien de partager le versement de ce qu'on réclame de nous à des époques désignées, ou bien les Chrétiens prendront 100 pour cent de la valeur de nos propriétés; sans cela nous venons réduits à un état misérable. Nous avons espoir que votre Excellence ne nous abandonnera pas dans notre détresse; nous n'avons d'autre refuge que la Porte.

Veuillez, &c.
(Signatures.)

No. 306.

Lord Dufferin to Lord J. Russell.—(Received January 5, 1861.)

(No. 44.)

My Lord,

Beyrout, December 21, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Lordship's information, copies of further despatches which I have this day addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at the Porte.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 306.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, December 18, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that yesterday afternoon M. Bédard took advantage of one of the unofficial meetings which the European Commission now occasionally hold, and which are not attended by his Excellency

Fuad Pasha, to inquire of his colleagues whether, in their opinion, it would be advisable to prolong the military occupation of Syria beyond the term specified by the Convention.

M. de Weckbecker replied that, for his part, he did not think the presence of a foreign force would be necessary a couple of months hence, inasmuch as it is probable we shall have devised in the meantime securities sufficient to render such an expedient unnecessary.

M. de Rehfuës declared that he was not prepared to state that it would have become safe to deprive the Christians of the guarantee afforded by the French army.

M. Novikow expressed his conviction that foreign troops would be necessary in Syria for some time longer.

M. Bédard himself dwelt on the moral effect their presence was calculated to produce all over the country.

I contented myself with expressing in as explicit and frank a manner as I could my conviction that the French army, useful as its arrival had originally been, was become an embarrassment to the Government; that I considered it could be withdrawn to-morrow from the country without risk; that Fuad Pasha and his troops were quite competent to maintain order, and that the police duties it was now discharging in the Lebanon were never intended to form part of its mission.

In fact I submitted to my colleagues the same opinion I have already had the honour of laying before your Excellency in my despatch of the 4th instant.

The meeting broke up without any result beyond the elicitation of the sentiments of the respective Commissioners on the above topic.

I have little doubt but that, in the course of time, the Representative of Prussia will see occasion to adhere to the opinion expressed by M. de Weckbecker and myself.

After the other Commissioners had left, I took occasion to explain privately to M. Bédard, that when first I came to the country, the idea had occurred to me that a provisional occupation of Beyrout by a very small body of European troops might usefully assist in the consolidation of whatever Government we might establish, but that subsequent observation had convinced me that even such a precaution as that was quite unnecessary, and that this conviction had been completely confirmed by my late visit to Damascus.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 2 in No. 306.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, December 21, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that yesterday a private Conference was held by the Commission at my house for the purpose of considering the question of reorganization.

In accordance with an agreement which had been come to between M. Bédard and myself, that gentleman was good enough to submit to the meeting in our joint names the fifteen Articles I had the honour of transmitting to your Excellency in my despatch of the 15th instant, on the express understanding that we in no degree committed our respective Governments to any ratification of the opinions they implied.

He subsequently proposed, on his own behalf, the further condition that the Lebanon in its ancient limits should form a single Pashalic, resembling in every respect the other Pashalics of the Province, with the important proviso that the Pasha appointed to it must invariably be a Christian.

In reference to this latter point, I took occasion to state that, in my own opinion, when a population was composed of Oriental Christians holding antagonistic creeds, a Turk was the best ruler that could be found; nevertheless, in compliance with the exigencies of public opinion in Europe, I was not averse to discussing such a proposal, on the understanding that the official in question should never be one of the fanatical and ignorant natives of the Mountain.

I am happy to state that our scheme, as developed in the Articles, seemed to meet with the cordial acceptance of all our colleagues. M. Novikow alone evinced some little dislike to the notion of the Lebanon being under a single Lieutenant. I trust, however, that the securities against the oppression of the Greek and Druse minority of the population by the Maronite majority, which are provided for by the general constitution of the Government of the Province, will satisfy his misgivings. I shall venture in a future despatch to examine the bearings of the proposed arrangement in this respect.

Did your Excellency consider such a precaution necessary, it would be well perhaps to stipulate expressly that the Pasha in question should not be a native.

I have, &c.

(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

No. 307.

Lord Dufferin to Lord J. Russell.—(Received January 5, 1861.)

(No. 45.)

My Lord,

Beyrout, December 23, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Lordship's information, copies of further despatches which I have addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at the Porte.

I have, &c.

(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 307.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, December 22, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Excellency's information, copy of the Protocol of the thirteenth sitting of the Syrian Commission, held on the 24th ultimo.

I have, &c.

(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 2 in No. 307.

Protocol of the Thirteenth Meeting of the Syrian Commission, held at Beyrout, November 26, 1860.

LE Lundi vingt-six Novembre, mil huit cent soixante, tous les Commissaires étant réunis à Beyrout, sous la présidence de Fuad Pacha, la séance est ouverte à deux heures et demie.

Le procès-verbal est lu et adopté avec quelques modifications, et, sur la demande de son Excellence le Commissaire Extraordinaire de la Sublime Porte, on convient d'annexer au prochain procès-verbal la note ci-jointe (voir l'Annexe No. 1).

Lord Dufferin donne lecture à la Commission d'une lettre de M. Rogers, Vice-Consul de Sa Majesté Britannique à Caïffa, touchant le fait signalé à la précédente séance par M. le Commissaire Prussien (voir les Annexes Nos. 2 et 3).

Fuad Pacha entretient la Commission du projet d'arrêté qu'il va prendre pour encourager le retour des Chrétiens dans la Montagne. Indépendamment de la restitution des objets pillés par les Druses et du règlement ultérieur de l'indemnité totale due aux Chrétiens, Fuad Pacha établit par ce projet, et conformément à la pensée exprimée par M. Bécclard à la dernière séance, une imposition en nature à lever sur les Druses immédiatement. Chaque Druse contribuable serait contraint de fournir une certaine quantité de denrées et d'objets de première nécessité, équivalente à peu près à une somme de onze cents piastres par tête. En dehors de cette contribution, on coupe des bois de construction, appartenant aux Druses, indistinctement partout où on les trouve,

et pour lesquels on donne déjà depuis quelque temps des quittances ou reçus que les propriétaires auront la faculté de présenter en déduction de leur contribution ultérieure.

M. le Commissaire Français fait observer que l'efficacité des mesures que M. le Commissaire du Sultan se propose de prendre, dépendra presque exclusivement du caractère et de l'intelligence des agents qui seront chargés de les mettre à exécution. Il émet à cet égard le vœu que les officiers commandant des détachements du corps expéditionnaire dans la Montagne soient employés par Fuad Pacha, concurremment avec les officiers de l'armée Turque.

Fuad Pacha répond à M. Bécclard qu'il vient précisément de s'entendre à ce sujet avec M. le Général de Beaufort, et que des ordres signés seront remis aux officiers Français pour faciliter et régulariser leur co-opération à la mesure ci-dessus indiquée.

M. Bécclard donne lecture d'une lettre de M. Outrey, Consul de France à Damas, contenant des renseignements précis sur la force contributive de cette ville. Dans l'opinion de M. Outrey, un tiers de l'impôt extraordinaire de 35,000,000 de piastres pourrait être facilement payé immédiatement en argent, et les deux autres tiers d'ici au mois de Mars.

M. de Weckbecker expose que, dans l'opinion de M. le Consul d'Autriche à Damas, si on répartissait l'impôt en quatre termes trimestriels, non seulement on pourrait lever facilement 35,000,000 de piastres, mais même le double.

M. le Commissaire Autrichien serait disposé à appuyer toute combinaison de ce genre qui, en répartissant l'impôt sur une durée de temps plus longue, permettrait d'en élever le chiffre, et de diminuer d'autant la part que le Trésor de l'Empire doit apporter dans la ressource totale des 150,000,000 qui paraissent indispensables au paiement des indemnités. Ce que la Porte fournira ne peut qu'être puisé dans la bourse de tous les contribuables de l'Empire, y compris celle des Chrétiens. Il semblerait juste à M. de Weckbecker de diminuer la charge du Trésor Impérial, en augmentant celle des Musulmans de Damas, seuls responsables des événements.

Lord Dufferin a reçu diverses informations relatives à la question de l'impôt de Damas. Il résulte de ces informations que Damas pourrait au maximum et à la rigueur payer 50,000,000 de piastres, en cinq mois, à raison de 10,000,000 de piastres par mois.

M. le Commissaire Prussien a reçu de Damas des renseignements relatifs à l'indemnisation des établissements religieux; mais il n'a rien à ajouter à ceux qu'il a déjà transmis à la Commission, touchant la question de l'impôt extraordinaire.

M. le Commissaire Russe n'a pas reçu encore ses informations de Damas. Celles qu'il a recueillies à Beyrout auprès de quelques personnes compétentes concordent assez exactement avec celles de M. Outrey pour le chiffre des indemnités particulières.

Fuad Pacha renouvelle les déclarations déjà faites par lui dans la précédente séance. Son intention n'est pas de ménager les Damasquins, qui ne le méritent sous aucun rapport; mais comme Plénipotentiaire du Sultan, chargé de l'exécution des mesures qu'il arrête, il ne doit en prendre aucune qui ne soit matériellement exécutable. Dans la question de l'impôt, il ne cherche même pas une combinaison qui rende le paiement de cet impôt facile pour les Damasquins. C'est la seule possibilité de percevoir qu'il a en vue. Les termes successifs qu'il a l'intention d'établir, sont destinés, dans sa pensée, à rendre possible une mesure de l'exécution de laquelle il est responsable devant son Souverain. Une perception en trois termes trimestriels lui paraît possible, et c'est sur cette combinaison que son esprit s'est le plus souvent arrêté.

M. Bécclard, tout en réservant toujours son opinion personnelle que la perception totale et immédiate de l'impôt pourrait être effectuée si l'on voulait avoir recours à des moyens énergiques, propose l'adoption d'un moyen terme. On pourrait peut-être, dit-il, adopter le chiffre de 50,000,000, indiqué par Lord Dufferin, en lever la moitié dans trois mois, et le reste en à-comptes mensuels de 5,000,000 par mois, ce qui donnerait à la perception une durée de huit mois.

Lord Dufferin appuie l'idée d'un moyen terme; il propose de l'appliquer non seulement à la perception, mais encore au chiffre de l'impôt. Entre 35,000,000, chiffre proposé par son Excellence, et 50,000,000, chiffre indiqué par lui, comme le maximum possible, il propose 40,000,000 à lever en sept mois,

savoir, 20,000,000 dans trois mois, et 5,000,000 pendant chacun des quatre mois suivants.

Son Excellence le Plénipotentiaire Ottoman pense que les travaux préparatoires de classification et de répartition prendront environ deux mois, et qu'à l'expiration de ce délai il faudrait pouvoir disposer d'une somme d'environ 40,000,000 pour donner aux Chrétiens un premier à-compte suffisant. En supposant que Damas puisse en effet donner dans trois mois 15,000,000 ou 20,000,000 de piastres, le Gouvernement devra fournir une somme égale. Son Excellence a le projet d'écrire dans ce sens à Constantinople. Quant au chiffre total de l'impôt et à la fixation définitive de délai dans lequel il sera perçu, Fuad Pacha hésite à prendre une détermination et se borne à donner à la Commission l'assurance de son bon vouloir.

Avant que la séance ne soit levée M. le Commissaire Français appelle l'attention de M. le Commissaire Extraordinaire du Sultan sur la manière défectueuse dont s'opère à Damas la mesure du désarmement et sur les mauvais procédés dont les autorités Turques usent à l'égard des Musulmans qui ont courageusement essayé de s'opposer au massacre des Chrétiens, tandis qu'elles prodiguent les faveurs et les marques d'estime à des hommes connus pour l'avoir encouragé. Il saisit cette occasion de rappeler que M. le Commissaire de Russie a dernièrement proposé à la Commission de se transporter à Damas, et que la Commission a remis la discussion de cette proposition à l'une de ses prochaines séances. Le moment est venu, selon M. Bécлар, de prendre une résolution à cet égard, et il lui semble que la Commission, qui doit un jour ou l'autre aller à Damas, ne saurait faire ce voyage dans un moment plus opportune. Chacun des membres de la Commission doit éprouver le besoin de juger par lui-même de la situation de Damas, et nul renseignement ne vaudra pour la Commission la vue même des lieux. M. Bécлар demande en conséquence que la Commission se rende à Damas.

Son Excellence le Commissaire Ottoman, en ce qui concerne la mesure du désarmement, répond qu'elle s'opère, d'après les renseignements qui lui parviennent, d'une manière aussi satisfaisante que possible; quant aux faveurs dont seraient l'objet des hommes connus pour avoir matériellement ou moralement participé aux événements et aux mauvais procédés dont seraient au contraire victimes les hommes honorables qui ont fait des efforts pour les arrêter, Fuad Pacha sollicite de M. Bécлар par l'intermédiaire de M. Outrey tous les renseignements qui seraient de nature à l'éclairer.

A l'égard du voyage de Damas, son Excellence Fuad Pacha est d'avis qu'il est inopportun et que même, à la veille du jour où il va prendre un arrêté relatif à l'imposition, la présence des Commissaires à Damas peut avoir le grand inconvénient de donner aux populations l'idée que le Gouvernement du Sultan n'agit pas de son propre mouvement, mais qu'il cède au contraire à la pression des Gouvernements étrangers. Son Excellence déclare qu'elle n'a aucun moyen de s'opposer à ce voyage, mais qu'elle ne peut ni s'y associer ni l'approuver.

M. de Weckbecker émet le vœu que Fuad Pacha prenne immédiatement l'arrêté concernant l'imposition et le publie avant que la Commission aille à Damas. De cette façon l'inconvénient signalé par son Excellence serait évité et le Plénipotentiaire Ottoman n'aurait pas l'air de céder à l'impulsion de la Commission.

Son Excellence Fuad Pacha fait observer que les Commissaires allant à Damas, nommément dans le but de recueillir des informations par eux-mêmes et sur les lieux relativement aux questions d'indemnité et de réparation des dommages éprouvés par les Chrétiens, il résulterait nécessairement de ce voyage un ajournement indéfini du règlement de la question d'impôt et d'indemnité.

M. Novikow en appuyant énergiquement la proposition de M. le Commissaire Français objecte que la Commission se rendant à Damas ne mettra pas beaucoup plus de temps pour y recueillir par elle-même les informations dont elle a besoin; que ces informations n'en mettront pour venir de Damas à Beyrouth par écrit; et que le retard, s'il a lieu, sera tout au plus de quelques jours.

M. de Rechfues appuie la proposition de M. Bécлар, et déclare que les renseignements qui lui parviennent sur la situation intérieure de Damas, sur l'inaction et l'impuissance des autorités, sur le mauvais esprit de la population Musulmane, rendent à ses yeux le voyage de la Commission à Damas aussi urgent que nécessaire.

Lord Dufferin a toujours été d'avis que les Commissaires devaient aller à Damas. Il rappelle la promesse qu'il a déjà faite précédemment d'appuyer la proposition de ce voyage dès qu'elle aurait rallié la majorité.

La proposition étant adoptée, MM. les Commissaires des cinq Puissances, sans fixer d'avance la durée de leur séjour à Damas, décident de s'y transporter.

La séance est levée à sept heures et demie.

(Suivent les signatures.)

Annexe 1.

La question de l'impôt extraordinaire que la ville de Damas doit payer, pour contribuer à indemniser les Chrétiens, étant mise à l'ordre du jour, la Commission examine les différents projets qui lui ont été soumis sur le mode de perception de cette imposition. La Commission ayant seulement mission de s'occuper de la question générale de la répression et de l'indemnité elle ne doit examiner la question de l'impôt extraordinaire que sous ce double point de vue, c'est-à-dire, comme un complément de la répression et comme un moyen d'indemniser les Chrétiens. Quant à son assiette et à son mode de perception c'est à l'autorité d'en fixer le meilleur moyen, et d'ailleurs un projet qui a été élaboré par Fuad Pacha et montré à la Commission offrait des avantages d'une répartition juste et équitable.

Fuad Pacha fait observer seulement que quel que soit le mode de la perception le recouvrement immédiat qui serait fixé à 35,000,000 de piastres lui paraît impossible. D'après les informations qu'il a prises auprès des Chrétiens notables de Damas même, cette ville dans la situation où elle se trouve aujourd'hui n'est pas en état de payer immédiatement une si forte somme. Le Plénipotentiaire du Sultan pourra employer toutes les rigueurs, mais des mesures de contrainte n'auront aucun effet devant une impossibilité matérielle. La confiscation des biens de ceux qui ne seront pas dans le cas de payer immédiatement leur contribution ne fera pas entrer dans les mains de l'autorité l'argent qui est nécessaire pour servir l'indemnité aux Chrétiens; ce moyen même retardera indubitablement la rentrée de la somme qu'on veut avoir immédiatement.

Annexe 2.

Lord Dufferin to Vice-Consul Rogers.

(Traduction.)

Monsieur,

Beyrouth, le 24 Novembre, 1860.

Un bruit m'étant arrivé qu'une caravane de chameaux chargés de munitions provenant du dépôt du Gouvernement à Saint Jean d'Acre aurait été vue allant dans la direction du Hauran accompagnée par des Druses, je vous prie de me faire savoir si une telle circonstance est parvenue à votre connaissance.

Je vous fais cette demande parcequ'on m'a dit que ce fait vous a été certifié par le Drogman de deux voyageurs Anglais.

(Signé) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Annexe 3.

Vice-Consul Rogers to Lord Dufferin.

(Traduction.)

My Lord,

Beyrouth, le 24 Novembre, 1860.

J'AI l'honneur d'accuser réception de la lettre de votre Seigneurie en date d'aujourd'hui, et, en réponse, de vous informer que peu de temps avant mon départ de Caïffa, deux voyageurs Anglais y arrivèrent, et que je fus informé par eux ainsi que par leur Drogman Gabriell Schembri, Maltais, demeurant à Jérusalem, que le 1 de ce mois, dans le voisinage de Medjdel-kroum, ils avaient rencontré une caravane de chameaux chargés, allant vers l'orient; que le susdit drogman avait demandé au Moukri (qui était Druse par hasard) ce qu'il portait, mais il reçut une réponse peu satisfaisante et puis il fit la même question à un

soldat Ture (mais je ne me rappelle plus s'il était de la troupe régulière ou de la troupe irrégulière) qui leur dit que les chameaux étaient chargés de munition de guerre. Le drogman conçut des soupçons à la suite de ces circonstances.

Aussitôt que j'en trouvai l'occasion je fis une enquête à Caïffa auprès de ceux qui avaient été dernièrement à St. Jean d'Acre et l'on m'assura que la susdite munition avait été envoyée à Damas. Là dessus je fus convaincu que le fait ne méritait plus d'investigation.

J'ai, &c.
(Signé) E. T. ROGERS.

Inclosure 3 in No. 307.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, December 23, 1860.

HIS Excellency Fuad Pasha having announced to us that he has sequestrated the estates of the principal Druse Chiefs who have either fled to the Hauran or are now in prison, I would venture to submit to your Excellency's consideration whether it is not somewhat unjust that the children and relatives of these unfortunate persons should be thus involved in their ruin, and left destitute of all support.

It is true, in cases of high treason, the forfeiture of his estates is considered the natural complement of the attainder and condemnation of the criminal; but when we take account of the peculiar relations which seem to have existed between the Druse Emirs and the Representatives of the Turkish Government at the commencement of the outbreak, it cannot be considered that their misdeeds ought to be denominated high treason.

Moreover, I understand that his Excellency is taking possession of the property of women and of others against whom no other crime can be alleged than that are Druses.

The straits to which he is reduced for want of money is, doubtless, one of the reasons which lead him to commit these irregularities, but the pressure which is continually being put upon him by the French General may also partly account for them.

It would be a great misfortune for the Turkish Government were the Druse nation to be deprived of its upper class by the confiscation of their landed estates, and although I consider it advisable that the feudal system should be abolished, the maintenance of a Druse aristocracy is very desirable.

Should these views meet with your Excellency's approbation, perhaps you would arrange that his Excellency Fuad Pasha should receive instructions from Constantinople in accordance with them. I have already endeavoured to press them upon his attention; but it is difficult for me to ascertain whether he is acting in accordance with the recommendations I have ventured to make.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

No. 308.

Lord Dufferin to Lord J. Russell.—(Received January 5, 1861.)

(No. 46. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Beyrout, December 23, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that yesterday I took advantage of a meeting of the Commission to communicate to my colleagues and to his Excellency Fuad Pasha the substance of the despatch I had the honour of addressing to your Lordship relative to the forced contribution it has been proposed should be levied indiscriminately on the Druse nation.

Before the business of the Commission began, M. Bécclard informed me confidentially that M. de Beaufort had been excessively annoyed at the proceedings against the Druses having been suspended, that he had written him a violent letter on the subject, that it was a scheme which he considered

peculiarly his own, that he disputed the right of the Commission to interfere, that he objected to my sources of information, and that it was with great difficulty he, M. Bécclard, succeeded in mitigating his resentment.

To this I replied that I was very sorry that anything should have occurred to arouse the General's displeasure; but that such a circumstance would not prevent me from acting in accordance with my conviction. That had the iniquitous decree in question been put into execution it would have been upon the Commission, and not upon M. de Beaufort, that the responsibility would have fallen. That in regard to our respective sources of information I considered M. Portalis a less trustworthy authority than Her Majesty's Vice-Consul Mr. Rogers, whom I had sent up into the Mountain for the express purpose of making me an impartial report; that that gentleman spoke Arabic like a native, that he was a person of character and intelligence intimately acquainted with the resources of the inhabitants, that he had corrected his own observations by the testimony of American missionaries, European silk-spinners, Christian and Druse Sheikhs, and that the result of his inquiries was in every respect confirmed by what I had learnt from every other quarter; that under these circumstances I could never consent to a measure I must consider one of gross injustice. Nevertheless, that I made great allowances for M. de Beaufort; that I could well understand how galling his position must be; that there was nothing I was not prepared to do to conciliate his good-will as far as was compatible with what I felt to be my duty; that I was convinced of the sincerity of his convictions; and that if only he would continue to act with the moderation he had hitherto displayed, I should never cease to bear testimony to the magnanimity of his conduct, and that hereafter I am sure he would be thankful to me for having unintentionally thwarted him on this occasion.

The Conference then commenced, and after a long debate terminated in an agreement that the obnoxious edict should be cancelled; that the Government should itself supply the destitute with grain which the late arrival of some corn from Egypt would enable it to do; that no money payment should be demanded from the Druse villages; but that they should be required to dispense to their Christian neighbours as much bedding and kitchen furniture as they themselves could conveniently spare.

The corn above alluded to is, I believe, a supply which some two months ago I ventured to ask his Excellency Said Pasha to bestow in charity on the Christians of Syria.

With regard to the conduct of the French General in this matter, I would merely remark that it is but natural he should take the view he does; that he neither has the time nor the opportunities of acquiring the information necessary to form a just conception of the condition of the Druse peasantry; that he is, of course, violently prejudiced against them; that the feelings incident to his trying and delicate position are stimulated by the staff of officers who surround him, and that it is probable a person less scrupulous and humane might have found opportunities to act with even less forbearance.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

No. 309.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received January 5.)

(No. 18.)

My Lord,

Paris, January 4, 1861.

I STATED to M. Thouvenel this afternoon that I was glad to learn from your Lordship that M. de Flahault had been authorized to express to Her Majesty's Government the readiness of the Emperor to withdraw his troops from Syria at the time stipulated, though he called to the remembrance of Her Majesty's Government that if they urged the evacuation, they would become responsible were the massacres against the Christians to be renewed.

M. Thouvenel admitted that M. de Flahault had been authorized to make this declaration, but he added that he had received advices from Syria since, which showed that the Great Powers were not unanimous in their opinions upon this subject.

At a meeting of the Commissioners, the question of the departure of the French troops had been mooted, when the Russian and Prussian Commissioners had urged the necessity of prolonging their stay. The Austrian Commissioner had expressed the opinion that they ought not to go before a stable Government should have been established in the Lebanon; and, in fact, Lord Dufferin had been the only Commissioner who had recommended their early departure.

I said that it was not extraordinary that Lord Dufferin should recommend it, when General Beaufort made no secret of his desire to take the law into his own hands, and wage a war of extermination against the Druses.

M. Thouvenel rejoined that it was to be regretted that General Beaufort had ever been placed under any sort of Turkish control; that had the General been allowed to act independently, the authors of the late massacres would long since have been punished, and the troops would have been withdrawn. As it was, there was every appearance of the Druses escaping scot-free.

M. Thouvenel continued, that he was still of opinion that it would be impossible to recall the troops before some sort of authority should have been restored. However, that was a question for Europe to decide, and when the proper moment should come, he would be prepared to act by the wishes of the Great Powers. In the mean time, every effort should be made to hasten the accomplishment of the labours of the Commission. He did not suppose that a few weeks more or less in the departure of the troops would signify, or that a prolongation of their stay for that period would require the signature of another Convention.

I replied, that I could not agree in this opinion. The Convention of the 5th September last declared at what period the occupation was to cease, and that occupation could not be prolonged for a day, without the consent of the Porte.

In the course of this conversation, M. Thouvenel constantly asserted that the Emperor was most anxious to bring his troops home, and he once said that His Majesty would on no account leave them unless they were to be joined by the troops of some other Power. He expressed, further, the hope that a naval force would, under any circumstances, be left upon the coast for some time.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

No. 310.

Lord J. Russell to Earl Cowley.

(No. 50.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, January 9, 1861.

I AM sorry to find from your Excellency's despatch No. 18 of the 4th instant, that the French Government have gone back from the assurances they gave me through Count Flahault.

I have now received from Lord Dufferin a despatch to Sir Henry Bulwer in which he gives an account of that meeting of the Commissioners to which M. Thouvenel alludes.

Your Excellency will see from the copy which I sent you in my despatch No. 23 of the 5th instant, that the Austrian Commissioner, speaking on the 19th of December, said that he saw no reason to think that the presence of a foreign force would be necessary two months from that time. You will see that Lord Dufferin expressed his opinion that the foreign force had become an embarrassment to the Sultan's Government; that it was discharging police duties which were no part of its mission; and that it might be sent away at once without risk.

The French and Russian Commissioners were in favour of the prolonged stay of the Foreign troops; the Russian Commissioner was not prepared to say that it would be safe to remove the troops, but Lord Dufferin seemed to expect that his opinion would change on further consideration.

Her Majesty's Government have every reason to be satisfied with the conduct and opinions of M. Bécclard; still his behaviour on this occasion appears somewhat strange. A Turkish Commissioner presides over the Commission: why was an occasion taken when he would be absent to raise this very serious

question? Turkey is at least as much interested as Russia or Prussia in the proper solution of this question. Her opinion, indeed, is well known. The Turkish Ambassador has frequently represented to me that his Government considers the presence of foreign troops an obstacle to the pacification of Syria.

Aali Pasha represents the Maronites and Druses as two factions, divided not by religious or moral faith, but by political rivalry. He paints the Maronites as eager to inflict wrong and suffering upon the Druses, even upon those altogether innocent of the massacre. He declares that the presence of the French troops encourages the insolence and the violence of the Maronites, and thus keeps up the feeling of hostility and rancour between them and the Druses.

Lord Dufferin's representations differ but little from those of Aali Pasha. I send your Excellency a copy of a despatch from Lord Dufferin to me,* in which he gives his opinions, and relates that the Christian communities had asked, through their bishops, for 4,500 of the heads of their enemies. This is the manner in which these Christian bishops in the East preach "peace on earth and goodwill towards men."

The Turkish Government, therefore, unrepresented at the meeting of the 19th of December, earnestly desire the removal of the foreign force, as serving only to keep alive the bloodthirsty desire of revenge entertained by the Maronites and other Christian sects.

But here an important reflection arises, to which I beg your Excellency, in your conversations with M. Thouvenel, to give due weight. The French Government proposed, in July last, that European troops should be sent to Syria. Her Majesty's Government consented on two conditions: first, that the foreign troops should act in concert with the Turkish Commissioner Fuad Pasha; and secondly, that the stay of the foreign troops should not be prolonged beyond six months. It was on the strength of these two conditions that Her Majesty's Government urged upon the Porte the acceptance of foreign aid to tranquillize Syria; it was on the faith of these conditions that the Porte gave her reluctant assent.

It is true that if Her Majesty's Government were convinced that there would be great risks in removing the foreign troops from Syria, Her Majesty's Government might be induced to urge upon the Porte a postponement of the evacuation. But as the conviction of Her Majesty's Government is quite the other way, it is impossible for Her Majesty's Government to consent to the prolongation of the stay of the French troops in Syria beyond the term fixed by the Convention of the 5th of September.

I have only further to say that all the Commissioners, except the Russian, appear to be agreed upon the general heads of an arrangement for the future government of Syria. There seems every reason to hope that before the end of this month the British, French, Austrian, Prussian, and Turkish Commissioners will have formally agreed to the fifteen Articles proposed by Lord Dufferin and M. Bécclard.

There will then remain no reason whatever for extending the period for which the Convention of the 5th of September authorizes the stay of foreign troops in Syria.

You will read this to M. Thouvenel.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 311.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received January 9.)

(No. 40. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Paris, January 8, 1861.

MY Prussian colleague informed me yesterday that he had been instructed to make a communication to the French Government respecting the affairs of Syria, and that a similar communication would be made by Count Bernstorff to your Lordship.

Count Pourtales did not enter fully into the subject, but I understand that

* No. 305.

his Government objects to the extended powers which it is intended by Lord Dufferin's plan to confer on the future Governor-General of that Province. The Prussian Government considers that, after the incapacity and listlessness evinced by the Turkish authorities on the occasion of the late massacres, it would be monstrous to leave again in such hands, with increased powers, the future fate of the Christian populations.

As your Lordship will have an opportunity of yourself conveying directly to the Prussian Government the views of Her Majesty's Government with regard to the future administration of Syria, I did not enter into any discussion with Count Pourtales, although I explained to him in general terms what those views and opinions were.

Count Pourtales spoke in very high terms of the masterly and impartial manner in which Lord Dufferin had embodied his plan for the restoration of order in Syria, and he gave me to understand that, personally, he should be inclined to support it, did he believe in the existence of a Turkish functionary, sufficiently honest and capable to carry out Lord Dufferin's views. Of Fuad Pasha's probity he has but a mean opinion, though he admits his superior talents. I confess that my opinion coincides with his, but as both his and mine were formed years ago, it is to be hoped that time and experience may have wrought those changes in the Pasha's character which would alone entitle him to the confidence which it is proposed to place in him.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

No. 312.

Baron Schleinitz to Count Pourtales.—(Communicated to Lord J. Russell by Count Bernstorff, January 11, 1861.)

M. le Comte,

Berlin, le 29 Décembre, 1860.

J'AI déjà eu l'honneur de porter à votre connaissance la dépêche que M. le Ministre des Affaires Etrangères de France avait adressée en date du 15 Décembre au Prince de la Tour d'Auvergne relativement aux affaires de Syrie, et dans laquelle il avait particulièrement relevé la nécessité de presser autant que possible les délibérations des Commissaires Européens sur l'organisation du Mont Liban.

Le Cabinet de Paris est d'avis que les populations de la Montagne ne doivent perdre aucun des garanties qui leur ont été assurées par les arrangements de 1845, et que, par conséquent, le privilège d'une administration nationale, en dehors de l'action directe de la Porte, doit leur être conservée. Je m'empresse de vous dire, M. le Comte, que, d'accord à cet égard avec M. Thouvenel, nous croyons juste de maintenir en principe l'autonomie dont les populations Libanaises ont jusqu'à présent joui. En effet le rôle que les autorités Ottomanes ont joué lors des derniers événements ne saurait être un motif d'étendre davantage leurs pouvoirs, et les Grandes Puissances de l'Europe qui sont intercedées en faveur des Chrétiens de la Syrie, n'atteindraient guère le but qu'elles se sont proposé, si elles voulaient consentir à une restriction des anciens droits de ces populations.

Le Commissaire du Roi sera donc chargé de prendre le maintien du privilège d'une administration nationale pour base de l'organisation future de la Montagne. Mais afin de garantir d'une manière plus efficace qu'elle ne l'a été par les arrangements de 1845, cette organisation, il sera important de régler avec la plus grande précision ses rapports avec les autorités Ottomanes, et ces rapports mêmes devront, ce nous semble, être adaptés aux réformes que la Porte jugera à propos d'introduire dans le régime administratif de la Syrie. Toutefois, pour obtenir une véritable pacification du pays, il ne suffira pas d'écarter l'ingérence illicite des organes de la hiérarchie Ottomane; il faudra encore prendre des précautions contre le renouvellement des conflits entre les diverses sectes qui habitent la Montagne. Sous ce dernier rapport il nous paraît désirable de prendre en considération l'idée de donner des Représentants particuliers, non-seulement aux Druses et aux Maronites, mais aussi aux autres communautés religieuses, et notamment aux Grecs orthodoxes.

Quant à la forme des institutions à établir, nous pensons avec le Cabinet

Français qu'il appartient aux Commissaires des Puissances qui se trouvent sur les lieux d'examiner les différentes combinaisons qui pourraient s'offrir, et de chercher à se mettre d'accord sur les propositions qu'ils auront à faire à leurs Gouvernements respectifs. C'est dans ce sens que j'ai fait rédiger les instructions qui ont été transmises à M. de Relhues, et sur lesquelles vous êtes autorisé, M. le Comte, à donner à M. Thouvenel toutes les explications qu'il pourrait désirer.

Si nous sommes d'avis que c'est aux Commissaires qui devrait être confiée la tâche de soumettre aux Puissances un projet de l'organisation future du Liban, il va sans dire que nous partageons aussi l'opinion du Cabinet Français sur l'inopportunité de transférer à Constantinople le siège des négociations relatives à cette affaire. La connaissance des détails et du pays nous semble être d'une trop grande importance pour qu'une solution conforme aux exigences de la situation puisse être préparée ailleurs que sur les lieux mêmes.

Recevez, &c.
(Signé) SCHLEINITZ.

No. 313.

Lord Dufferin to Lord J. Russell.—(Received January 11, 1861.)

(No. 47.)

Beyrout, December 30, 1860.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Lordship's information, copies of further despatches which I have addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at the Porte.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 313.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, December 24, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that, during the course of a visit lately paid to me by Bishop Tobia, that prelate stated, in reply to a question I put to him as to the progress which was being made throughout the Mountain in the work of reconstruction, that matters were proceeding in a very unsatisfactory manner.

"Indeed," said I, "I understood that great exertions were being made by the French troops to build up the ruined villages."

"No," answered the Bishop, laughing, "they have done very little, and what they have done is done more for show than anything else."

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 2 in No. 313.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, December 30, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Excellency's information, copy of the Protocol of the fourteenth sitting of the Syrian Commission.

I would merely observe, in reference to it, that it presents a remarkable instance of that innocent inaccuracy which occasionally characterises the reports of our proceedings.

On this occasion, as I have already informed your Excellency, I had exposed in detail the injustice of the taxes intended to be levied on the Druses.

M. Béclet in reply admitted the force of my remarks, and excused himself for the precipitation with which he had introduced his original proposition, stating that he had fully expected the opinions he had expressed would have been corrected by the superior information of his colleagues, &c.

The other Commissioners followed in the same strain, and after a considerable amount of discussion, which occupied the best part of the sitting, it was agreed that the first Decree should be cancelled, and the whole subject re-considered on the Saturday se'nnight.

On reference, however, to the *procès-verbal*, it will be seen that this incident is compressed into a paragraph but little calculated to convey an adequate idea of what had passed.

As it would have been an ungracious act upon my part to have insisted upon the introduction of a record which would probably have been slightly disagreeable to my French colleague, I refrained from calling attention to the omission; and if I mention the subject at all to your Excellency, it is only to furnish myself with an excuse, should a study of our Protocols convey to you an idea, as I am sometimes disposed to think they may, that I take a less active part in the proceedings of the Commission than is consistent with my duty.

I have, &c.

(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 3 in No. 313.

Protocol of the Fourteenth Meeting of the Syrian Commission, held at Beyrout, December 15, 1860.

LE quinze Décembre, mil huit cent soixante, tous les Commissaires étant réunis à Beyrout sous la présidence de Fuad Pacha, la séance est ouverte à deux heures et demie.

Le *procès-verbal* est lu et adopté après quelques modifications.

Son Excellence M. le Plénipotentiaire Ottoman après avoir déposé le tableau d'une partie des condamnations qu'il a déjà prononcées depuis son arrivée en Syrie, croit devoir appeler de nouveau l'attention de la Commission sur l'impôt en nature à prélever sur les Druses. L'arrêté pris au sujet de cet impôt rencontre des difficultés d'exécution imprévues. Il a été constaté qu'un grand nombre de contribuables ne possédaient pas les objets que, aux termes de l'arrêté, ils devaient être contraints de livrer dans un délai de cinq jours qui va expirer. Les biens des Druses les plus riches sont déjà mis sous le séquestre depuis longtemps. L'imposition devra donc peser presque exclusivement sur les fellahs, c'est-à-dire, sur les villageois qui, pour la plupart, sont loin de pouvoir payer la somme de 1,100 piastres, équivalent en argent d'imposition en nature des objets et denrées qu'ils ne possèdent pas.

Lord Dufferin est d'avis que l'arrêté pris par Fuad Pacha a en effet besoin d'être révisé. M. le Commissaire Britannique se livre à divers calculs et communique à la Commission divers renseignements qui la déterminent à remettre à Samedi prochain l'examen définitif de la question.

M. le Commissaire Français, servant d'interprète à ses collègues d'Autriche, de Grande Bretagne, de Prusse, et de Russie, fait connaître à M. le Commissaire du Sultan l'impression qu'ils ont tous rapportée de leur séjour à Damas. Ils sont tous unanimement d'avis que, sans rigueur excessive, la ville de Damas peut être contrainte à payer, en cinq mois, à partir du premier quartier prochain, une somme de 40,000,000 de piastres, et les villages environnants une somme de 24,000,000 de piastres en cinq mois, à partir de la même époque. En outre et comme complément indispensable de cette mesure de répression et de réparation pécuniaire, il leur a paru que son Excellence M. le Plénipotentiaire Ottoman devrait essayer de réagir contre les tendances déplorables de la population Musulmane, tendances qu'ils ont été à même de constater, en sévissant contre les coupables qui n'ont encore subi ni châtement ni disgrâce, et en donnant d'autre part des marques éclatantes et publiques de la satisfaction du Sultan à ceux d'entre les Musulmans, malheureusement trop rares, qui se sont honorablement conduits pendant les événements.

Son Excellence Fuad Pacha adhère au chiffre de 40,000,000 de piastres pour Damas et de 24,000,000 pour la banlieue; mais il renouvelle les réserves

qu'il a déjà faites dans les précédentes séances sur la possibilité matérielle de lever pareille somme dans les délais ci-dessus indiqués. Quant aux témoignages de satisfaction que les Commissaires réclament en principe et qui consisteraient, soit en récompenses honorifiques, soit en exemption d'impôt, il se déclare prêt à l'accorder. Il est également disposé à sévir contre les personnes qui seraient convaincues d'avoir participé aux crimes qui ont déjà motivé de sa part de si hautes et de si rigoureuses condamnations.

Sur la question de l'impôt M. de Rehfuès fait observer qu'il dépend de la Sublime Porte de rendre sa perception possible dans un bref délai en payant, sur les fonds provenant de l'emprunt qu'elle vient de contracter, tout ou partie de la somme de 20,000,000 à 30,000,000 de piastres qu'elle doit à Damas.

M. de Weckbecker, d'accord sur ce point avec ses collègues, émet l'avis que les soldats qui faisaient partie de la garnison de Damas lors des événements, devraient en être tous éloignés indistinctement.

M. Béclet appuie énergiquement le vœu exprimé par M. le Commissaire d'Autriche. Il rappelle en outre que la garnison de Damas étant alors d'au moins 800 soldats, sans compter 2,500 hommes environ dont se composaient les troupes irrégulières et le personnel de la police, on peut à bon droit s'étonner que dans le grand nombre de chefs que comporte un tel effectif, le Commissaire Ottoman n'ait cru devoir en frapper qu'un seul. Tous les officiers sans exception, selon M. Béclet, devraient être mis en accusation. On a objecté, en leur faveur, l'absence d'ordres et l'insuffisance des troupes. Mais il y a des circonstances critiques où un officier doit suppléer par sa propre initiative aux ordres qu'il n'a pas reçus et lors même qu'il se croirait en présence d'une force supérieure se faire tuer à la tête de ses soldats. C'est sur ce principe que repose l'honneur des armées, et malheureusement on ne peut citer un seul officier de la garnison de Damas qui, dans ces tristes journées, ait su accomplir son devoir.

M. de Rehfuès rappelle à son tour que, peu de temps avant les événements, le quartier Chrétien qui était occupé par des détachements de la garnison a été tout-à-coup évacué, et que la veille même du massacre, les officiers ont envoyé chercher, dans les maisons où ils avaient logé, les effets qu'ils y avaient laissés. Il ajoute que plusieurs d'entre eux ne craignent pas de se vanter hautement, aujourd'hui, d'avoir prêté le main au soulèvement.

Fuad Pacha déclare n'avoir pas eu connaissance des faits qui viennent d'être rapportés. Il n'a pas cru devoir punir des officiers que leur Commandant-en-chef, avant sa condamnation, a lui-même dégagés de toute responsabilité. MM. les Commissaires trouveront cette déposition dans les dossiers qui leur seront prochainement remis.

Avant la fin de la séance, M. le Commissaire Russe, d'accord avec ses collègues, propose que, en ce qui concerne les établissements religieux indigènes, son Excellence Fuad Pacha veuille bien provoquer, de la part des chefs mêmes des communautés, des renseignements exacts sur les pertes subies par ces établissements. Ces données seraient communiquées à la Commission, comparées avec le résultat des informations recueillies par les Commissaires, et finalement consacrées par la Commission de la même manière que le chiffre des indemnités privées. Il est décidé, en conséquence de cette proposition, que le chiffre de l'indemnité à accorder aux établissements religieux indigènes de Damas sera fixé après une enquête particulière, et restera provisoirement en dehors de l'indemnité générale attribuée en principe aux Chrétiens, et dans le chiffre total de laquelle l'indemnité particulière aux établissements religieux sera ultérieurement comprise.

La séance est levée à cinq heures.

(Suivent les signatures.)

Inclosure 4 in No. 313.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, December 30, 1860.

I HAVE the honour of transmitting to your Excellency translated copies of the judgments and sentences which have been submitted for approval to his

Excellency Fuad Pasha by the Extraordinary Tribunal of Beyrout appointed to try the Turkish officials and Druse Chiefs whose misconduct is supposed to have caused or aggravated the late unhappy disturbances in the Mountain.

In accordance with an understanding which had been previously come to between his Excellency Fuad Pasha and the European Commission, the above-mentioned judgments are of no force or authority until they shall have been examined, approved of, or revised, by his Excellency and the Commission.

In examining the sentences recommended by the Court, it is to be observed that all the Druse prisoners are condemned to death, and all the Turkish officials to imprisonment. A result so contrary to public expectation and the *prima facie* requirements of justice cannot be acquiesced in without a strict inquiry into the circumstances which have led to it.

The Commission has accordingly intimated to his Excellency Fuad Pasha that, inasmuch as somebody must have been responsible for what occurred in the Mountain, and that, as the chief weight of such responsibility must rest, until the contrary can be proved, upon the Turkish magistrates and officers charged with the maintenance of order, it is necessary we should be made acquainted with the considerations which have authorized so strange an apportionment of punishment.

To these representations the Turkish Commissioner has responded by placing at our disposal the minutes of evidence taken at the trial of Khoorshid Pasha, Tahir Pasha, and the rest.

As soon as we shall have examined these documents, the Commission will be in a position to pronounce authoritatively on the circumstances which are supposed to mitigate the degree of each Turkish prisoner's culpability.

The same considerations which forbid us to acquiesce in the judgments passed on the Turkish officials render it necessary to examine with great care the grounds upon which are based the sentences passed on the Druse Chiefs. Happily, the fact of our Delegates having been present at the trial of these last, renders this part of the investigation a little less unsatisfactory than it might otherwise have been. A fortnight must probably elapse before we can conclude the most painful and anxious investigation upon which we are about to enter.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 5 in No. 313.

Judgments passed by the Extraordinary Tribunal at Beyrout on the Chief People inculpated in the late Disturbances in the Mountain.

(No. 1.)—Sentence on Khurshid Pasha.

(Translation.)

IN submitting to your Excellency the inclosed Minutes of the full and minute evidence adduced at the trial of Khoorshid Pasha, late Governor-General of Sidon, before the Beyrout Extraordinary Commission, in connection with the late events of Mount Lebanon, we beg to state as follows:—

The accusations against Khoorshid Pasha are: that on the occurrence of the individual assassinations between the Maronites and the Druses, 400 or 500 of the Christians of the Kesrouan assembled in a body at the beginning of the month Zil-kaadeh, and marched to a place called Ant Elias, with the intention of attacking the Druses; that Khoorshid Pasha, on being apprized of this, instead of taking measures to disperse the assembly, and thereby check the disorders at their first appearance, only dispatched the Military Commander, Tahir Pasha, with a detachment of troops, to a place called Hazmieh, and followed them himself on the succeeding day; that, on the evening of that day, the village of Beit-Miri and the surrounding hamlets were burned by the Druses; that on the third day, Hadeth and Baabda, and the adjacent villages, were plundered and burned, and the Christians remaining in them killed; that these events Khoorshid Pasha witnessed and knew of as they occurred, but did not move against the Druses, and dispersing their forces, and seizing their leaders, detain and punish them, but left them at liberty to act as they pleased; that in like

manner, at no other place where disturbances occurred, all over the Mountain, were the troops to be found on the spot employed against the Druses, agreeably with the mazbatta of the Grand Medjlis of Beyrout, authorizing that course; that, moreover, evidences of coming commotions were strikingly apparent on every side: and whereas it was the first of duties to take adequate measures for the protection of the different places, and especially of Deir-el-Kamar, Khoorshid Pasha neglected that duty.

In his defence, Khoorshid Pasha pleads that he had sent an agent to disperse the Christians of the Kesrouan, and dispatched troops to the spot, Hazmieh, which divides the territory of the respective belligerents, by which means he prevented the Christians from outstepping the boundary, and protected their side against invasion; that owing to the paucity of the troops at his disposal on the one hand, and the large numerical strength of the Druses on the other, he could not, without exposing Beyrout and all the other places to risings and disorders which might have resulted in a universal catastrophe, both march against the Druses, whose hands were carrying fire and sword to all points of the Mountain, and look to the safety of Beyrout and the other places at the same time.

This justification of Khoorshid Pasha has not been deemed sufficient to clear him from his shortcomings in not suppressing the disorders, whether at their first appearance or after their outbreak; but it has not appeared that he did anything to cause them, and he is found to have endeavoured, though imperfectly, to do his duty.

Under these circumstances, we are of opinion that sentence of death cannot be legally passed upon Khoorshid Pasha, and that his punishment should be one degree less than capital.

We therefore, subject to your Excellency's superior judgment and pleasure, condemn him to perpetual imprisonment in a fortress, which is equivalent to the punishment of the galleys for life inflicted by the Penal Code.

(Follow the signatures of the President and members of the Extraordinary Commission.)

(No. 2.)—Sentence on Tahir Pasha.

IN submitting to your Excellency the inclosed Minutes of the trial of Tahir Pasha, late Military Commandant at Beyrout, we beg to state as follows:—

The accusations against Tahir Pasha are, that at the commencement of the civil war he had been furnished with a mazbatta of the Grand Medjlis at Beyrout, authorising him to attack whichever of the belligerent parties, whether Druse or Maronite, disobeyed the orders of the Government, and was despatched with a detachment of troops to Hazmieh. That, immediately after his arrival there, the Christians of Kesrouan, with flags flying and other symbols of war, passed by the outskirts of his camp to the villages of Baabda and Hadeth; that on perceiving this, it was his bounden duty to disperse and turn back that assemblage, and, in case of resistance, to proceed in virtue of the mazbatta which he held, to oppose them by force of arms; that in like manner it was his duty to have acted similarly against the Druses on their attacking those villages, but that he failed to discharge that duty; that when he was despatched by Khoorshid Pasha, late Vali, to Deir-el-Kamar for that protection and safety of the town, he effected a sort of reconciliation between the Christians and Druses, and then, representing to the Vali that perfect security had been established at Deir-el-Kamar, requested leave to return, and he departed; that, after his return, the Foreign Consular authorities having represented officially that the place was about to be again attacked he gave them full assurances to the contrary; that two days afterwards the town was assaulted, and atrocities, such as the burning of houses, plunder of property, and slaying of persons were committed; that thus Tahir Pasha neither dispersed the Christian assemblage above referred to, nor took adequate measures for the permanent security of Deir-el-Kamar, but trusted to the false assurances of the Druses and returned to the camp.

In his defence Tahir Pasha pleads that it is true that as soon as the Government perceived that disorders were about to arise he was furnished with a force—the mazbatta in question—of about 600 Regulars, namely, 300 Riflemen and 300 Infantry, and despatched to Hasmieh; that on the day of his arrival there about

200 Maronites being seen to pass by the camp, he at once sent troops to stop them, and on their being asked where they were going to, some people of the Emir Beshir Ahmed, the Christian Kaimakam, who accompanied them, pretended that these people belonged to those parts, and were going to their houses; and, moreover, as they were Christians, and the Christian villages of Hadeth and Bâabda were close at hand, he, Tahir Pasha, did not disperse them or cause them to turn back; that, with regard to his expedition to Deir-el-Kamar, he had, on his arrival there summoned separately the Christian notables and the Druse Mokâtajis, namely, Said Bek Jumblat, and the representatives of Kâsim Abu Nêked, of Ali Hamâdi, and of Beshir Abu Nêked, and called upon and admonished to lay aside their differences and animosities; that thereupon they were reconciled, and embraced each other in token thereof, and all enmity between them was apparently removed; the Druses engaged not to do anything to Deir-el-Kamar, and both promised not to injure each other. He took a written bond to that effect from the Christians, and, although he also demanded a bond from Said Bek and the other representatives, these said they would not give one in consequence of the other Mokâtajis not being present, but took an oath to the above effect; that he, Tahir Pasha, thereupon believed in the engagements thus given on both sides, and, considering that perfect security had been established at Deir-el-Kamar, he obtained Khorshid Pasha's permission to return to the camp, and quitted Deir-el-Kamar, and upon the strength of the engagements aforesaid he gave assurances to the foreign Consuls that nothing should happen to the town; that he had received orders from the Commander-in-chief at Damascus to act in concert with Khorshid Pasha in all matters that related to the Mountain; that he did not act against the Druses on their attacking the villages of Bâabda and Hadeth in the vicinity of the camp, as much on account of the small number of troops at his disposal, as from the absence of orders from Khorshid Pasha to do so.

Although Tahir Pasha is charged with having allowed the assemblage of the Christians of Kesrouan, which was the first insurrectionary movement in the recent disturbances, to pass by his camp without inquiring into its nature and object; with not having protected Hadeth and Bâabda, and other places bordering on his camp; with not moving from the camp during the subsequent disorders; with trusting to the promises of a few Druse Chiefs, and quitting Deir-el-Kamar to return to the camp; yet, his being in a subordinate position under the orders of a superior, his not having been present in person at the massacre of Deir-el-Kamar, and his having given express orders to the Military Commandant there to defend the place, are extenuating circumstances.

We are therefore of opinion, subject to your Excellency's superior judgment and pleasure, that the punishment of death cannot be legally awarded to Tahir Pasha, and that such a penalty should be waived, and the one next after it, namely, perpetual imprisonment in a fortress, be inflicted.

(Follow the signatures of the President, and the other members of the Extraordinary Commission.)

(No. 3.)—*Sentence on Suliman Nûri Bek (Colonel).*

The Minutes of the full and minute evidence adduced at the trial of Colonel Nûri Bek, at the Beyrout Extraordinary Commission, for his conduct in connection with the late events of the Mountain, have been submitted to your Excellency.

The accusations against Nûri Bek are that, on the Government being apprized that Zahleh, a town of several thousand houses, was about to be, like other towns, attacked and pillaged by the Druses, Nûri Bek was furnished with a buyuruldi, a force of 400 Regulars and a field-piece, and dispatched to Zahleh with orders that, in the event of the Druses making any attack on the town, he was first to admonish and advise them to desist, and in case of their not listening to him to repel them by force of arms and protect the place. But eighteen or twenty hours after the arrival of Nûri Bek, at a place distant two hours and a-half from Zahleh, called Mekseh, the town of Zahleh was attacked and pillaged, and a considerable number of its inhabitants killed by the Druses, assembled in the Bekân at Kubb Elias and other places from the Haurân and Mount Lebanon. That, whilst it was the bounden duty of the said Nûri Bek to march against the

Druses, whether before or during the attack, and to carry out the instructions of the buyuruldi of which he was the bearer, he neglected that duty.

In his defence he pleaded that, on the day of his arrival at Mekseh about two hours before sunset, he summoned from fifty to sixty of the Druse Chiefs and minor Sheikhs, read to them the buyuruldi he held, and gave them the necessary advice. They all replied, "We have heard, and we obey;" and engaged, unless the Christians of Zahleh attacked them, they, on their part, would not attack the people of Zahleh; and withdrew. That on the morning of the following day he commissioned the regimental Secretary, Ali Efendi, to proceed on his part to Zahleh, in order to inform the inhabitants that he, Nûri Bek, had arrived with troops to protect them and the town. But the Zahleh outposts, stationed about Maalaka, refused to allow the said Secretary to pass them, treated him with contumely, and drove him away; whereupon he turned back. Hardly had he reached head-quarters before the people of Zahleh and the Druses commenced fighting. Nûri Bek's intention then was to march to the scene of action with his troops in order to disperse the combatants and fall upon the Druses, but owing to the numerical strength of the Druses, and to the smallness of the force at his disposal, and to the fact that both Christians and Druses were now intermingled, he did not consider himself able to carry his intention into execution, and, therefore, could not carry out his orders to their full extent.

Although Nûri Bek having trusted to the words of the insurgent Druses lays him under accusation, yet the rejection and contumelious treatment he received at the hands of the people of Zahleh, when he apprised them that he was charged to protect them, and the fact that Zahleh could not be entered, the battle having commenced, are extenuating circumstances. We are, therefore, of opinion, subject to your Excellency's superior judgment and pleasure, that the punishment of death cannot legally be awarded to Nûri Bek, and that it might be proper to condemn him to the punishment next after that of death, namely, perpetual confinement in a fortress.

(Follow the signatures of the President and other members of the Extraordinary Commission.)

(No. 4.)—*Sentence on Wasfi Efendi and Ahmed Efendi.*

The Minutes of the interrogatory and trial of Wasfi Efendi, Kahia to Khorshid Pasha, Vali of Saida, and of Ahmed Efendi, Comptroller of property at Beyrout, and Agent for the Druses and Christians near the Local Government, in connection with the recent events of the Mountain, have been submitted to your Excellency.

These persons are accused on all sides of having concerted and combined together, and committed various reprehensible acts, and of having contributed by the moral support they afforded to the Druses, in bringing about the recent outbreak in the Mountain.

In their defence, they showed that their mutual accord and understanding were of a private character, and that they did not interfere in any affair that was not within their official attributions, or meddle in the least in matters properly belonging to the Government, and denied the truth of all that was reported of them.

Although no personal and specific charge is brought against the persons, yet all the people of the country, and the foreign authorities declare that their mutual accord and agreement was not of an ordinary description, but had reference to the affairs of the country; that they intermeddled in the action and measures of the administration, and occupied themselves reprehensibly in matters which were not within their legitimate cognizance.

Although no personal delinquency has been proved against the individuals which is provided for by the law, yet the general accusations and indications against them, we are of opinion, subject to your Excellency's superior judgment and pleasure, that it might be proper to inflict upon them a penalty next to that of death, and perpetual imprisonment in a fortress, namely, the punishment of

temporary confinement in a fortress, with perpetual deprivation of their rank and offices.

(Follow the signatures of the President and other members of the Commission.)

(No. 5.)—*Sentence on Said Bek Jumblâd.*

The Minutes of the trial of Said Bek Jumblâd, before the Beyrout Extraordinary Commission, in connection with the recent events of the Mountain, have been submitted to your Excellency.

It has been proved that Said Bek Jumblâd, who is the Mokâtaji of the district of Shûf Jezzîn, and the other Mokatas, and who, as the supreme head of all the Druse Chiefs and Mokâtajis, and the most influential and respected amongst them, wrote at the commencement of the movement a re-assuring letter to the Christians of the Mokata of Jezzîn, engaging that they would not be in any way injured; yet that this place was subsequently attacked by the Druses, pillaged and burned, and a considerable number of its inhabitants killed.

That after having given to Tahir Pasha his word and assurances that no injury whatever would be done to Deir-el-Kamar on the part of the Druses, that town was nevertheless attacked, and all sorts of atrocities committed in it. That Ismail-el-Atrash, with other Chiefs of Haurân Druses, first addressed Said Bek a letter in the form of a mazbatta, informing him of their having come to attack Zahleh, and requesting his sanction, and to be made acquainted with his pleasure on the subject, after which they marched upon Zahleh, which they plundered and burned, killing many of its people. That after this, Ismail-el-Atrash, with a number of Druses, came straight to the residence of Said Bek, at Mokhtârah, who, after receiving them with distinction, invested Ismail-el-Atrash and his companions with robes of honour, and made them presents. That, under cover of bringing away his sister from Hasbeya, he deputed Ali Hamâdi, with a large number of Druses and attendants of his, to that place. That, on the arrival of Ali Hamâdi and his followers there, they brought to pass the well-known occurrences of Hasbeya. Moreover, it has appeared from the written and verbal depositions of numbers of military officers and Christians, that Said Bek testified his satisfaction with Suliman Zein-ed-Din, who had brought the head of the Emir Sa'ad-ed-Din, Shehab of Hasbeya, and as a reward appointed him "Su bashi" (land agent) in his service. That he did not pay any attention to the messages sent to him by Colonel Abd-es-Salam Bek, by one of his officers to the effect that the Druses, were about to attack Deir-el-Kamar, and calling upon him to come and quell the commotion. That, in a word, he took a principal share in all the events of the Mountain, whether great or small, and was the moral organizer and author of the insurrectionary combination.

Such being the state of the case, and considering that Said Bek Jumblâd planned and organized the insurgent bands, who rose and revolted against the subjects of His Imperial Majesty, whilst holding the office of a Mokâtaji and a functionary of the Government; we are of opinion, subject to your Excellency's superior judgment and pleasure, that pursuant to Articles 55, 56, and 57 of the Penal Code, he be punished with death.

(Follow the signatures of the President and other members of the Commission.)

(No. 6.)—*Sentence on Sheikh Hosein Talhûk.*

The Minutes of the trial of the Mokâtaji Hosein Talhûk, in connection with the late events of the Mountain, have been laid before your Excellency.

The said Hosein Talhûk is amongst those Mokâtajis who are second in point of influence and consideration, and he is the oldest of them. It has appeared from his own admission, and from the depositions of Khoorshid Pasha, and of Christians and Druses whose names are recorded, that he was, with arms in his hands, amongst the insurgents who were at the attack of Hadeth and Ba'abda; whilst it was his duty, as a Mokâtaji, to protect the Christians of his district, and to prevent the Druses from committing disorders they did out of it.

He, on the contrary, headed the insurgent bands who rose and revolted against the subjects of His Imperial Majesty.

We are, therefore, of opinion, subject to your Excellency's superior judgment and pleasure, that, pursuant to Articles 55, 56, and 57, he should be punished with death.

(Follow the signatures of the President and other members of the Extraordinary Commission.)

(No. 7.)—*Sentence on Asaad Talhûk.*

The Minutes of the interrogatory and trial of the Mokâtaji Asaad Talhûk, in connection with the recent events of the Mountain, has been submitted to your Excellency.

The said Asaad Talhûk belongs to the second class of Mokâtajis in point of influence and consideration.

It has appeared from his own admission, and the statements of the Druse Chiefs and individuals examined, that he and his attendants were with the insurgent bands at the attack on the villages of Hadeth and Baabda.

Such being the case, and considering that he, the said Asaad Talhûk, headed the insurgents that rose and revolted against the subjects of His Imperial Majesty, we are of opinion, subject to your Excellency's superior judgment and pleasure, that, pursuant to Articles 55, 56, and 57 of the Penal Code, he should be punished with death.

(Follow the signatures of the President and other members of the Commission.)

(No. 8.)—*Sentence on Kâsim Bek Noked.*

We have submitted to your Excellency the proceedings and the evidence adduced on the trial of Kâsim Bek Abu Noked, one of the Mokâtajis, in connection with the late events in the Lebanon.

It has appeared, from his own admission, and from the depositions of the Druse Sheikhs and individuals examined, that the said Kâsim Bek Abu Noked, who belongs to the second class of Mokâtajis in influence and social position, has been amongst the insurgents at the events which occurred at Deir-el-Kamar. Accordingly the said Kâsim Bek Abu Noked having been found to have been a leader of the insurgent bands who rose and revolted against the subjects of the Porte, we are of opinion, subject to your Excellency's superior judgment and pleasure, that, pursuant to Articles 55 and 56 of the Penal Code, he should be punished with death.

(Follow the signatures of the President and other members of the Commission.)

(No. 9.)—*Sentence on Asaad Amâd.*

We have submitted to your Excellency the proceedings and the evidence adduced at the trial of Asaad Amâd, one of the Mokâtajis of Arkûb.

It has appeared from his own admission that the said Asaad Amâd, on the occasion of the events of Zahleh, marched against that town with his people and partizans; and it has also appeared from the depositions of the Druse Sheikhs and individuals examined, that he was amongst the insurgent bands.

Such being the case, Asaad Amâd has been found to have been, notwithstanding his quality of Mokâtaji, a leader of the insurgent bands who rose and revolted against the subjects of the Porte; and we are of opinion, subject to your Excellency's superior judgment and pleasure, that, pursuant to Articles 55, 56, and 57 of the Penal Code, he should be punished with death.

(Follow the signatures of the President and other Members of the Commission.)

(No. 10.)—*Sentence on Mir Mohammad Kasim Raslan.*

We have submitted to your Excellency the proceedings and the evidence adduced at the trial of Mir Mohammad Kasim Raslan, one of the relations of the Druse Kaimakam.

It has appeared from his own admission that the said Mir Mohammad was present at the attack on the villages of Baabda and Hadeth, and from the depositions of several Christians, whose names are recorded, that he was one of the leaders of the insurgent bands.

Accordingly, the said Mir Mohammad, having been a leader of the insurgents who rose and revolted against the subjects of the Porte, we are of opinion, subject to your Excellency's superior judgment and pleasure, that pursuant to Articles 55, 56, and 57 of the Penal Code, he should be punished with death.

(Follow the signatures of the President and other members of the Commission.)

(No. 11.)—*Sentence on Selim Jumblad.*

We have submitted to your Excellency the proceedings and the evidence adduced at the trial of Selim Jumblad, a Druse Chief, in connection with late events in the Lebanon.

It appears from a general mazbatta, forwarded by the Mudir of that district in reply to the inquiries addressed to him, that the said Selim Jumblad was a leader and organizer of the Druse insurgent bands during the disturbances of Jezzin, and that he committed various unlawful and base actions, such as plundering and violation.

Although the said Selim Jumblad denies having committed these crimes, yet his guilt has been established both by the contents of the aforesaid mazbatta, and by the statements and declarations of the Christian inhabitants of Jezzin examined.

Accordingly, the said Selim Jumblad, having been found a leader of the insurgents who rose and revolted against the subjects of the Porte, we are of opinion, subject to your Excellency's superior judgment and pleasure, that, pursuant to Articles 55, 56, and 57 of the Penal Code, the punishment of death should be inflicted on him.

(Follow the signatures of the President and other members of the Commission.)

(No. 12.)—*Sentence on Jemal-ed-Din Hamdan.*

We have submitted to your Excellency the proceedings and the evidence adduced at the trial of the Druse Chief Jemal-ed-Din Hamdan in connection with the late events in the Mountain.

It appears from a mazbatta drawn up by the Christian inhabitants of Jezzin, and forwarded by the Mudir of that district, in reply to information which he was required to furnish, that the said Jemal-ed-Din Hamdan was a leader of the Druse bands during the disturbances at Jezzin, and also the murderer of a certain person called Kamar. Although the said Jemal-ed-Din Hamdan denies having committed the murder, his guilt has been established, both by the contents of the above-mentioned mazbatta, and by the information given by the Christian inhabitants.

Accordingly as the said Jemal-ed-Din Hamdan was a leader of the insurgents, who rose and revolted against the subjects of the Porte, we are of opinion, subject to your Excellency's superior judgment and pleasure, that, pursuant to Articles 55, 56, and 57 of the Penal Code, the punishment of death should be inflicted on him.

(Follow the signatures of the President and other members of the Extraordinary Commission.)

(No. 13.)—*Sentence on Mahi-ed-Din Shibli.*

We have submitted to your Excellency the proceedings and the evidence adduced at the trial of the Druse Maha-ed-Din Shibli, and inhabitant of Keft Katra, and agent to Beshir Bek Abu Noked, who was arrested in connection with the late events of the Lebanon.

In a petition presented by the Khuri Augustin, the actual President of the Convent of Deir Amik, near Deir-el-Kamar, the said Mahi-ed-Din Shibli was charged with being the person who strangled the priest Athanasius Naum, late President of the above-mentioned Convent, who was found strangled in his room during the night of the 7th of March, 1276, and robbed of his money and various articles. The prosecutor was in consequence summoned before the Extraordinary Commission, and minute inquiry made from him as to the matter in question, who stated, that independently of suspicions resting on the said Mahi-ed-Din Shibli of having murdered the said President, from the fact of Shibli having been acquainted with the deceased, who was reported to be wealthy, as well as from the fact of his having visited him frequently, he had declared boastfully in the course of the disorders in the Mountain to Bolos Sûsa—a heterodox Greek, and a merchant of Deir-el-Kamar—to Habib Selûm, and to Yusef Abu Shaib, that he was the murderer. At his examination Mahi-ed-Din Shibli admitted his acquaintance with the deceased, and acknowledged that he repeatedly visited the Convent, but he formally denied the truth of the accusation of murder brought against him.

Thereupon Bolos Sûsa, Habib Selûm, and Yusef Shaib were summoned before the Commission and separately examined. Bolos Sûsa stated that on Wednesday night, two days before the attack on Deir-el-Kamar, the said Mahi-ed-Din came to the house of Khojah Beshara, an inhabitant of Deir-el-Kamar, and that in the course of a conversation relative to the affairs of the Mountain, during which he insinuated that Deir-el-Kamar would do well to surrender without making any resistance to Beshir Bek Abu Noked, he said to Khojah Beshara, "It was I who killed the President of Deir Amik." Habib Selûm deposed, that on Wednesday night, when Deir-el-Kamar was attacked by the Druses, the said Mahi-ed-Din, standing in front of the Governor of the town, cried out in a loud voice, saying, "For the sake of a priest the Christians want to upset the world; it is I who killed the President of Deir Amik—what can they do?" Yusef Abu Shaib likewise stated that on Wednesday night, two days before the attack on Deir-el-Kamar, the said Mahi-ed-Din came to the house of Elias Sûsa and said voluntarily, "You will not deliver up your arms to Beshir Bek Abu Noked, and you offer resistance: I alone have killed the President of Deir Amik;" and proceeded on his way to the house of the said Beshara Sûsa. These three witnesses at the same time declared that when Mahi-ed-Din went to the house of Sûsa and made these confessions, many other persons were present, all of whom, however, were killed during the massacre at Deir-el-Kamar, so that they alone are the only remaining witnesses. They, moreover, confirmed the veracity of their depositions by swearing on their faith through their respective priests.

Although, therefore, the said Mahi-ed-Din denies having committed the murder, yet, as besides the commission of this crime, there are several Christians whose names are on record, who declare that during the attack at Deir-el-Kamar he, Shibli, was amongst the insurgent bands, and plundered with them, we are of opinion, subject to your Excellency's superior judgment and pleasure, that he should be punished with death.

(Follow the signatures of the President and other members of the Commission.)

(No. 14.)—*Sentence on Ali Said.*

The Minutes of the trial of Ali Said, a Druse of the village of Sulima, who had been arrested in connection with the recent events of the Mountain, have been submitted to your Excellency.

Ali Said was charged with the murder of Khottâr Diâb, a Christian of Andâra, at the commencement of the disturbances in the Mountain, whose head he cut off, and brought to the Druse Chief Khottâr Bek. On being interrogated on the subject, Ali Said denied all knowledge of the matter.

The wife of the deceased, who preferred the accusation, then indicated the Druses, Mohammed Abu Asâf, and Mohammed Harb, and Sheikh Kâsim, and other persons who were eye-witnesses of the crime.

Thereupon, the Mudîr of Deir-el-Kamar, of the Commission, reported that in answer to the inquiry which he instituted into the matter, the above-named Mohammed Abu Asâf and Mohammed Harb deposed that they saw the head of Khottâr Diâb in the hands of the accused, and heard from other eye-witnesses that he was his murderer, and that Ali Saïd was a well-known bad character.

As from the purport of the report, it is understood that Ali Saïd did commit the crime in question, we are of opinion, subject to your Excellency's superior judgment and pleasure, that he should be punished with death.

(Follow the signatures of the President and other members of the Commission.)

(No. 15.)—*Sentence on Beshîr Meri Noked.*

As will appear from the inclosed Minutes of the interrogatory and trial of the Druse Chief, Beshîr Meri Noked, that the women Hanna Fahûm Jenna and Menneh deposed that the said Beshîr Meri Noked killed the Christian Ibrahim Shamûn, on the occasion of the attack on Deir-el-Kamar, and the Christians Khalîd Shawîsh and Asaad Nakash gave information that he committed various enormities, such as plundering and despoiling.

As, such being the case, the crime of the said Beshîr Meri Noked was apparent, we are of opinion, subject to your Excellency's superior judgment and pleasure, that he should be punished with death.

(Follow the signatures of the President and other members of the Commission.)

(No. 16.)—*List of Names and Description of the Leaders of the Insurgent Bands in the late Outbreak in the Mountain, who have not been captured, and have fled towards the Haurân.*

1. Khottâr Bek Amâd, commanded at the attack on Zahleh.
2. Beshîr Bek Amâd, commanded at the battle of Deir-el-Kamar.
3. Sheikh Kenj Amâd, commanded at the attack on Zahleh and Deir-el-Kamar.
4. Milhim Bek Amâd, the same.
5. Sheikh Mahmûd Talhûk, commanded at the attack on Hadeth and Ba'abda.
7. Beshîr Bek Noked, one of the greatest miscreants, commanded at the attack on Deir-el-Kamar.
8. Sheikh Mahmûd, commanded at the attack on Zahleh.
9. Sheikh Hamûd Mansûr, one of the greatest miscreants, was present at the different conflicts.
10. Sheikh Mansûr, the same.
11. Ali Bek Hamâdi, a great insurrectionary leader, was present at the attacks on Deir-el-Kamar and Hasbeya.
12. Mahmûd Hamâdi, an insurrectionary leader, present at the attack on Deir-el-Kamar.
13. Kasim Yûsef Hamâdi, a great insurrectionary leader, commanded at the occurrences in the neighbourhood of Sidon.
14. Koweidîr Hamâdi, the same, was present at the attack on Deir-el-Kamar.
15. Milhim Hamâdi, the same.
16. Mustafâ Dweik, an insurrectionary leader, was present at Deir-el-Kamar.
17. Kâsim Abd-es-Samad, the same.
18. Rafi Abd-es-Samad, the same.
19. Yûsef Hasan Abd-es-Samad, the same.
20. Kâsim Abu Shakra, the same.
21. Khotâr Abu Shakra, the same.
22. Jadban Abu Shakra, the same.

23. Sulimân Bek Hamâdi, an insurrectionary leader, was present at Deir-el-Kamar.

24. Ismail-el-Atrash, an insurrectionary leader, was a leader of the Haurân Druses at the attack on Zahleh.

25. Hazimel Hawâdi, the same.

26. Hamad Abu Fakr, the same.

27. Koblân Amer, the same.

28. Hamad Azzân, the same.

29. Sulimân Kalkas, the same.

30. Deibris Amer, the same.

31. Fendi Azzân, the same.

32. Yûsef Saru, the same.

33. Waked-el-Hamdân, the same.

In all, thirty-three persons.

From the depositions of the Christians in general, and of the Druse Chiefs and individuals examined, it has appeared that the above-named and described thirty-three persons were leaders in the attacks on Hasbeya, Rasheya, and Deir-el-Kamar, and the other places in the Mountain, and that they committed every species of atrocity and crime. In consequence, however, of their having left their homes, and fled to the Haurân, they have not been, as yet, captured and tried; but we are of opinion, subject to your Excellency's superior judgment and pleasure, that on being taken, they should, pursuant to Articles 55, 56, and 57, of the Penal Code, be punished with death.

(Follow the signatures of the President and the other members of the Commission.)

TABLEAU indiquant les Personnes compromises dans les événements de la Montagne, arrêtées et jugées, ainsi que le genre de leur Culpabilité et les Punitons infligées.

Numéros des Registres.	Noms des Coupables.	Condition, Profession, et lieux des Résidences des Coupables.	Genre de Culpabilité.	Nature des Crimes.	Peine Prononcée.	Observations.
1	Khurshid Pacha, Gouverneur-Général de Sayda	Vézir, et en activité de service	A manqué aux besoins de ses fonctions	Il n'a été prouvé que son manque aux devoirs de ses fonctions, sans être coupable d'aucun autre crime	Détention perpétuelle dans une forteresse.	
2	Tahir Pacha, Commandant Militaire de Beyrouth	Général de Division de l'armée Impériale	Idem	Idem	Idem.	
3	Nûri Bek	Colonel de l'armée régulière	Idem	Il n'a pas marché contre les Druses et n'a pas défendu Zahleh	Idem.	
3*	Ali Vassî	Kéhia de Khurchid Pacha ..	S'est mêlé dans des affaires en dehors de sa compétence	De nombreuses accusations sont portées contre lui	Exclusion perpétuelle des fonctions publiques, et détention provisoire dans une forteresse.	
4	Ahmed Salih	Contrôleur de Beyrouth et Chargé des Affaires des Druses et des Chrétiens	S'est mêlé dans des affaires en dehors de sa compétence	De nombreuses accusations sont portées contre lui	Idem.	
5	Saïd Bek Jumblâd	Fermier des Moukatas de Chouk et Jezzîn, et autres	Auteur et instigateur des troubles de la Montagne, et chef des séditieux	A eu des intelligences avec tous les Druses, et fut le promoteur des troubles	La mort.	
6	Houssein Talhouk	Moukâtadjî (fermier) de Gharb-el-Zokain	Chef des séditieux	A dirigé les séditieux dans les troubles de Baabda et de Hadeth	Idem.	
7	As'ad Talhouk	Idem	Idem	Idem	Idem.	
8	Kâsim Neked	Moukâtadjî de Shekar ..	Idem	A dirigé les malfaiteurs dans les premiers désordres de Deir-el-kamar	Idem.	
9	Asa'ad Amâd	Un des Moukâtadjis d'Arkûb	Idem	A dirigé les séditieux pendant les troubles de Zahleh	Idem.	

* Sic in orig.

Tableau indiquant les Personnes Compromises, &c.—continued.

Numéros des Registres.	Noms des Coupables.	Condition, Profession, et lieux de Résidence des Coupables.	Genre de Culpabilité.	Nature des Crimes.	Peine Prononcée.	Observations.
10	Mir Mohammed Kâsim Reslân	Druse notable	Chef des séditieux	Il s'est mis à la tête de ceux qui ont commis le saccage de Hadeth et Ba'abda	La mort.	
11	Seltm Jumblâd	Un des Chefs Druses ..	Chef de malfaiteurs	Il a dirigé les séditieux dans les événements de Jezzîn	Idem.	
12	Jémel-ed-dîn Hamadân	Un des Cheiks Druses ..	Idem	Non seulement s'est mis à la tête des saccageurs de Jezzîn, mais il a tué le nommé Kamer	Idem.	
13	Mahi-ed-dîn Shibli	Trésorier de Beshîr Neked ..	Meurtrier	A assassiné le Supérieur de Deir Arnik	Idem.	
14	Ali Saïd	Druse de basse classe ..	Emeutier renommé	A assassiné le nommé Antarali Abu Khotâr Diâb	Idem.	
15	Beshîr Néri	Druse notable	Meurtrier	A tué a Deir-el-Kamar le nommé Ibrahim, et s'est livré à tous les crimes	Idem.	
16	Beshîr Bek Nasîf Abu Neked	Un des Chefs Druses ..	Chef des séditieux	Il a dirigé les saccageurs de Deir-el-Kamar	Idem	N'ayant pas encore été arrêté, il a été jugé par contumace.
16	Khattâr Amâd	Idem	Idem	Il s'est mis à la tête des malfaiteurs dans les événements de Zahleh	Idem	Idem.
16	Beshîr Bek Amâd	Idem	Idem	Il a été chef des séditieux pendant les troubles de Zahleh et Deir-el-Kamar	Idem	Idem.
16	Sheikh Kenj el Amâd	Idem	Idem	Il a dirigé les malfaiteurs dans les événements de Zahleh et Deir-el-Kamar	Idem	Idem.
16	Milhem Bek Amâd	Idem	Idem	Idem	Idem	Idem.
16	Sheikh Mahmûd Talhûk	Idem	Idem	S'est mis à la tête des saccageurs de Ba'abda et Hadeth	Idem	Idem.
16	Sheikh Nasîf Talhûk	Idem	Idem	Idem	Idem	Idem.
16	Sheikh Mahmûd Elâîd	Chef Druse	Idem	S'est mis à la tête des saccageurs de Zahleh	Idem	Idem.
16	Sheikh Hamûd Manvûr	Idem	Idem	Idem	Idem	Idem.

Tableau indiquant les Personnes Compromises, &c.—continued.

Numéros des Registres.	Noms des Coupables.	Condition, Profession, et lieux de Résidences des Coupables.	Genre de Culpabilité.	Nature des Crimes.	Péine Prononcée.	Observations.
16	Sheikh Mansur Kadli .	Chief Druse .	Chief des séditeux .	S'est mis à la tête des saccageurs de Hasbaya, Rasheya, Deir-el-Kamar .	La mort .	N'ayant pas encore été arrêté, il a été jugé par contumace.
16	Soliman Bek Hamadi .	Idem .	Idem .	A la tête des saccageurs de Deir-el-Kamar .	Idem .	Idem.
16	Mahmud Hamadi .	Idem .	Idem .	Idem .	Idem .	Idem.
16	Kawader Hamadi .	Idem .	Idem .	S'est mis à la tête des malfaiteurs qui ont commis des crimes en dehors de Saïda .	Idem .	Idem.
16	Milhem Hamadi .	Idem .	Idem .	Idem .	Idem .	Idem.
16	Kasim Yusuf Hamadi .	Idem .	Idem .	Idem .	Idem .	Idem.
16	Mustafa Dweik .	Idem .	Idem .	Idem .	Idem .	Idem.
16	Kasim Maruf Abd-es-Samid .	Idem .	Idem .	Idem .	Idem .	Idem.
16	Rafi Abu Djis Abd-es-Samid .	Idem .	Idem .	Idem .	Idem .	Idem.
16	Kasim Beshir Abu Shakra .	Idem .	Idem .	Idem .	Idem .	Idem.
16	Yusef Hasan Abd-es-Samid .	Idem .	Idem .	Idem .	Idem .	Idem.
16	Khotir Ibn Kasim Abu Shakra .	Idem .	Idem .	Idem .	Idem .	Idem.
16	Ismail-el-Atrash .	Grand Chief Druse .	Idem .	Idem .	Idem .	Idem.
16	Hezibeh Houdieh .	Idem .	Idem .	Idem .	Idem .	Idem.
16	Hamud-el-Fakhr .	Idem .	Idem .	Idem .	Idem .	Idem.
16	Kablan Anar .	Idem .	Idem .	Idem .	Idem .	Idem.
16	Hamud Azam .	Idem .	Idem .	Idem .	Idem .	Idem.
16	Selim-el-Asas .	Idem .	Idem .	Idem .	Idem .	Idem.
16	Djiz Amer .	Idem .	Idem .	Idem .	Idem .	Idem.
16	Kanadi Azam .	Idem .	Idem .	Idem .	Idem .	Idem.
16	Yusef Sari .	Idem .	Idem .	Idem .	Idem .	Idem.
16	Waked-el-Hamdan .	Idem .	Idem .	Idem .	Idem .	Idem.
16	Ghariban Abu Shakra .	Idem .	Idem .	Idem .	Idem .	Idem.

Inclosure 7 in No. 313.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, December 30, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Excellency's information, copy of the Protocol of the fifteenth sitting of the Syrian Commission held on the 22nd instant.

I have, &c.

(Signed)

DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 8 in No. 313.

Protocol of the Fifteenth Meeting of the Syrian Commission, held at Beyrout, December 22, 1860.

LE vingt-deux Décembre, mil huit cent soixante, tous les Commissaires étant réunis à Beyrout sous la présidence de Fuad Pacha, la séance est ouverte à deux heures et demie.

Le procès-verbal est lu et adopté avec quelques modifications.

L'ordre du jour appelle l'examen de la question de l'impôt en nature à lever sur les Druses.

Selon M. le Commissaire Britannique, cet impôt, tel qu'il a déjà été réglé, ne peut être levé sans injustice et sans danger pour l'existence même de la nation des Druses. Aux termes de l'arrêté pris par son Excellence Fuad Pacha, chaque Druse contribuable serait contraint de fournir une certaine quantité d'objets ou leur équivalent en argent montant à une somme de 1,100 de piastres. Or il est constant, d'après des renseignements nombreux et dignes de confiance, que la majorité des Druses ne possède pas ces objets, ni leur équivalent en argent, et se trouve dans l'impossibilité matérielle de se les procurer. Cet arrêté a en outre le très grave inconvénient de frapper indistinctement tous les Druses, riches ou pauvres, de la même contribution.

A Damas, on se propose au moins de tenir compte de la capacité relative des contribuables. On les divise en catégories, et il y a même un projet pris en sérieuse considération par la Commission dans lequel la classe la plus pauvre est exemptée de toute contribution. Lord Dufferin croit devoir, au nom de l'humanité, réclamer en faveur des Druses l'adoption de ce système. Provoqués à la guerre civile par l'attitude menaçante des Maronites, les Druses sont certainement moins coupables que les Musulmans de Damas; et cependant si on frappe Damas d'une contribution de 40,000,000 de piastres et les Druses d'un impôt en nature équivalent par tête à un impôt de 1,100 de piastres, eu égard au nombre des Musulmans de Damas entre lesquels sera réparti l'impôt, les Druses, toute proportion gardée, paieront plus en cinq jours que les Damasquins en cinq mois. Lord Dufferin ne peut s'empêcher de voir là une grande injustice. Il rappelle enfin qu'un certain nombre de villages Druses ont déjà été soumis à des réquisitions et que d'autres ont été complètement pillés. Ne pas tenir compte de ces circonstances et demander aveuglement à tous les Druses, dans tous les villages, une même contribution, ce serait vouloir consommer la ruine matérielle d'un peuple qui a été déjà frappé dans son existence politique. En conséquence Lord Dufferin est d'avis que l'arrêté pris par son Excellence devrait être rapporté.

Fuad Pacha fait observer que cet arrêté, lorsqu'il en a donné lecture, n'a soulevé dans la Commission et même de la part de M. le Commissaire Britannique, aucune objection; que la perception de l'impôt ne doit pas, comme le dit Lord Dufferin, être effectuée dans le laps de cinq jours, mais seulement commencer dans un délai de cinq jours à partir du jour de la promulgation, ce qui est bien différent; que par conséquent, les agents chargés de cette perception peuvent y mettre tout le temps nécessaire, et que d'ailleurs, ces mêmes agents ont reçu des instructions qui leur enjoignent de tenir compte des circonstances dans l'exécution de la mesure et d'user de ménagements partout où il le faudrait.

M. le Commissaire Prussien est d'avis que la mesure est urgente et

indispensable. Il penche à croire qu'elle n'est point aussi rigoureuse que vient de la présenter Lord Dufferin, dont tous les calculs reposent sur une base douteuse, c'est-à-dire, sur une estimation probablement beaucoup trop élevée des objets demandés aux Druses.

M. le Commissaire Français a volontiers consenti pour sa part à ce que la mesure de l'impôt sur les Druses fût de nouveau examinée, quant à ses détails, et retardée de quelques jours dans l'exécution, mais il n'admet pas que l'arrêté déjà pris par Fuad Pacha et approuvé par la Commission puisse en principe être rapporté. Il verrait même un grand inconvénient à la prolongation d'un retard qui compromet l'autorité et laisse indécises les populations. Cet impôt, si on veut le considérer au point de vue pénal, est bien loin de correspondre au nombre et à l'énormité des crimes commis par la nation Druse, et ne saurait à aucun titre passer pour une persécution, mais on doit le considérer surtout au point de vue de l'utilité. C'est une mesure d'urgence destinée à mettre dans les mains du Gouvernement une certaine quantité, la plus grande possible, d'objets de première nécessité. La teneur de l'arrêté ne peut donc qu'être très-sommaire, mais c'est au discernement des agents chargés de l'exécuter à l'adoucir et à le tempérer dans l'exécution toutes les fois qu'il en sera besoin. S'il était d'ailleurs démontré d'avance que certains objets seront d'une perception par trop difficile, M. Bédard ne s'oppose pas à ce que, séance tenante, la liste en soit révisée.

M. le Commissaire d'Autriche donne lecture d'une lettre d'après laquelle les Druses seraient hors d'état de payer la contribution fixée dans l'arrêté. En général les Druses n'ont que très-peu d'objets mobiliers. Dès qu'ils ont un peu d'argent, ils achètent de la terre. On ne trouvera donc en général chez les Druses ni meubles superflus ni argent comptant. M. de Weckbecker demande s'il ne serait pas convenable d'appliquer exclusivement l'imposition aux riches dont les biens sont déjà sous le séquestre et sur lesquels on pourrait réaliser immédiatement la perception, soit des objets en nature, soit de leur équivalent pécuniaire.

M. le Commissaire de Russie appuie cette proposition. Au fond, dit M. Novikow, il s'agit d'une question pratique, la question de savoir quel est le meilleur moyen à employer pour se procurer les objets de première nécessité dont les Chrétiens ont besoin. Si les Fellahs Druses ne sont pas en état d'en fournir en nombre suffisant, c'est aux Sheikhs des villages qui possèdent des propriétés, et qui ont nécessairement profité de la plus large part du butin, qu'il faut demander ces objets ou l'équivalent en argent; de plus les Mokatadjis Druses étant les principaux contribuables, c'est au Gouvernement qui a séquestré leurs propriétés qu'incombe le devoir de soulager le sort des Chrétiens avec les ressources qu'il peut tirer de ces propriétés.

MM. les Commissaires de France et de Prusse insistent pour que la mesure soit exécutée dans son ensemble contre la masse des Druses, sauf à ne pas poursuivre ceux d'entre eux qui ne possédant rien ou que le strict nécessaire ne pourraient rien donner. M. le Commissaire de Prusse propose l'adoption d'un double principe de solidarité entre les individus d'un même village et les villages d'un même district, et M. le Commissaire de France la radiation de plusieurs objets, tels que les semailles et les bassines en cuivre dont la perception passe pour être trop difficile.

Lord Dufferin admet la possibilité de la mesure avec ces divers tempéraments, et son Excellence Fuad Pacha exprime à ses collègues l'intention où il est de leur envoyer dès le lendemain copie du nouvel arrêté qu'il va prendre conformément à l'opinion moyenne autour de laquelle viennent de se rallier tous les suffrages de la Commission.

Son Excellence Fuad Pacha dépose entre les mains de M. le Vice-Président le texte des sentences émanées du Tribunal Extraordinaire siégeant à Beyrouth, ce qu'il soumet à l'examen de la Commission.

Avant que la séance soit levée, M. le Commissaire Français interpelle Fuad Pacha relativement à l'impôt extraordinaire dont la ville de Damas doit être frappée. Il désirerait savoir si la mesure a été décrétée conformément à l'avis unanime des membres de la Commission.

Fuad Pacha répond qu'il vient de recevoir une dépêche officielle par laquelle il est informé que son Gouvernement se réserve de décider la manière dont les indemnités seront fixées et payées aux Chrétiens, ainsi que la fixation des impôts à prélever pour les indemnités. Son Excellence ajoute qu'elle éprouve personnellement le besoin d'en terminer au plus vite avec cette affaire, et qu'elle

se propose d'expédier immédiatement des dépêches pressantes à Constantinople pour obtenir que la Sublime Porte hâte sa décision.

M. le Commissaire Français exprime l'étonnement et le profond regret que lui inspire cette décision, puisqu'elle entraînera nécessairement des retards dans l'exécution d'une mesure que tous les membres de la Commission ont unanimement considérée comme étant d'une extrême urgence. Il ne croit pas se tromper en ajoutant que le sentiment unanime des cinq Commissaires est partagé par leurs Gouvernements respectifs.

La séance est levée à six heures.

(Suivent les signatures.)

Inclosure 9 in No. 313.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrouth, December 30, 1860.

I HAVE the honour of transmitting to your Excellency copy of a written communication I have addressed to my colleagues and to his Excellency Fuad Pacha relative to the extreme caution to be observed in administering the punishment with which it has been deemed necessary to visit the chief actors in the massacres of Hasbeya, Rasheya, and Deir-el-Kamar.

A glance at this document will sufficiently explain to your Excellency the motives which dictated it; but I would wish more particularly to mention that, having perceived among some of my brother Commissioners a determination to insist upon a severer degree of punishment being inflicted on the Druses than either their crimes deserved or the necessity of the case required, it seemed to me desirable to intervene in such a way as should make them duly sensible of the grave responsibilities we were incurring.

When the subject was lately discussed among ourselves more than two of the Commissioners were inclined to think the number of executions should certainly exceed 200, while another, the most moderate of the three, averred that at the least they must come within "les centaines."

Such a view of the case appeared to me far too sanguinary, and I endeavoured to the best of my ability to modify their opinion.

The next day I communicated the accompanying observations to the Commission, and I am happy to say that the four propositions appended to it were generally accepted.

The bearing of the fourth article is especially important, inasmuch as the fact of only fifty-six citizens having suffered at Damascus will keep the number of executions in the Mountain within reasonable limits.

Should it be satisfactorily proved by credible eye-witnesses, as I am afraid it will, that of those already in custody more than 200 or 300 murdered in cold blood multitudes of unarmed men or little children, I do not think it would be an exaggeration of severity if 20 or 30 of their number are required to pay the forfeit with their lives. It is true great excuses may perhaps be made even for crimes so horrible as these, but I am convinced that if we wish to put a stop to the blood-fueds of the Mountain, and the cruel system of vendettas which prevails among all classes of its inhabitants, it will be necessary to make an example of a proportion of those who have carried so hateful a custom to lengths hitherto unheard of, even in the annals of Lebanon warfare.

I have, &c.

(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 10 in No. 313.

Communication addressed by Lord Dufferin to his Colleagues in the Syrian Commission.

HER Britannic Majesty's Commissioner has the honour of making the following formal communication to his colleagues relative to the necessity of

taking precautions against a careless and unintelligent application of the summary mode of procedure which they have recommended to his Excellency Fuad Pasha in regard to those of the Druse nation who were chief actors in the massacres of Hasbeya, Rasbeya, and Deir-el-Kamar.

It will be in the recollection of the Commissioners that, in compliance with an understanding arrived at between the Turkish High Commissioner and themselves, an invitation was conveyed to the religious heads of the various Christian communities to furnish his Excellency Fuad Pasha with sworn lists of those persons the pre-eminent atrocity of whose crimes render them worthy of death. By entrusting the awful task of denunciation to the prelates of the sects, it was hoped that a spirit of merciful discrimination would mitigate the vindictive animosity which only too naturally animates their respective flocks, and reduce within the scope of Christian justice the numbers of those designated for capital punishment.

But it would appear that this expectation was unfounded, inasmuch as out of the total number of 8,000 grown-up men who constitute the Druse population of the Lebanon, 4,500 heads have been demanded by these holy personages.

It is true the remonstrances of the Turkish High Commissioner induced them subsequently to modify the amount of their requisition for blood, but even so they could only be brought down to the modest figure of 1,300.

Lord Dufferin cannot refrain from expressing his indignation at the spirit of vengeance thus exhibited, and he sees in it a fresh indication of that desire to exterminate the Druse nation which he has already had occasion to allude to as having been, in his opinion, one of the chief causes of the late disturbances in the Mountain.

A circumstance, however, which has accidentally come to his knowledge, and which he now hastens to communicate to his colleagues, has added considerably to the sentiments of abhorrence with which he regards the conduct of those prelates, and fills him with misgivings as to the justice of the denunciations with which they have furnished his Excellency Fuad Pasha.

It would appear that, on the night of the 26th instant, a man from the Deir, of the name of Yusef Shafli, accompanied by a policeman, called at the house of a Druse Sheikh inhabiting Beyrout named Sirham Id, and accusing him of the murder of his cousin at Deir-el-Kamar, on the day of the massacre, proceeded to drag him to prison. Luckily a Christian neighbour interfered, and, by becoming security for the accused, induced the prosecutor to delay his capture. The next morning, however, Yusef Shafli re-appeared, and again attempted to make the Druse his prisoner, but, in the meantime, Sheikh Sirham Id had appealed to an English merchant and several of his Christian neighbours with whom he had been in the habit of daily intercourse throughout the summer, and proved that, on the day of the alleged crime, and for weeks before and afterwards, he had never stirred from Beyrout.

Confounded by such testimony the man from Deir-el-Kamar, though he protested against the interest thus exhibited on behalf of a Druse, agreed to a composition, provided he should receive a certain sum as blood-money. This claim was also abandoned, on the woman from whom the accusation emanated being confronted with the accused. Nevertheless, the unfortunate Druse Sheikh was compelled to remunerate the policeman.

If an outrage of this sort can be perpetrated with impunity within the precincts of Beyrout, and under the eyes of his Excellency Fuad Pasha, we may imagine what will take place among the recesses of the Mountain, where no European or enlightened Christian influence can interpose to check the undisciplined fury of a population maddened by the wrongs they have endured, and encouraged apparently by their spiritual leaders to maintain the ancient cry of blood for blood!

Considerations of this nature have been for some time past pressing in a painful manner on the attention of the British Commissioner, and in order to guard himself against the charge of having participated, however remotely, in the shedding of innocent blood, he has the honour of submitting in writing the following propositions to the consideration of his Excellency Fuad Pasha and of the Commission:—

1st. That no Druse shall be capitally tried by court-martial except on the charge of having murdered in cold blood an unarmed man, woman, or a child.

2nd. That the evidence of two eye-witnesses be considered necessary to secure a capital conviction.

3rd. That in determining the proportion of those who are to suffer capitally, due regard be had to the numbers of the Druse nation who have been murdered with impunity by the Christians, since the arrival of the Commission in Syria.

4th. That a less severe measure of capital punishment shall be dealt out to the Druse nation than that which has been considered adequate at Damascus.

No. 314.

Lord Dufferin to Lord J. Russell.—(Received January 11, 1861.)

(No. 48.)

My Lord,

Beyrout, December 30, 1860.

IN obedience to your instructions to report on the number of Maronite and Greek Christians in the Lebanon, as conveyed to me in your Lordship's despatch No. 36 of the 1st instant, I have the honour to transmit herewith copy of a paper with which I have been furnished by M. Novikow, the Russian Commissioner, giving the number of Greeks resident in the Lebanon.

M. Novikow, your Lordship will perceive, does not offer an opinion as to the number of the Heterodox Greeks, but I am assured that they form but an inconsiderable portion of the population of the Lebanon, with the exception, however, of Sidon, where they number a few thousand souls.

My Russian colleague also informs me that, although, in the list with which he has been good enough to furnish me, the total number of Greeks amount to 27,980 souls, yet at the same time he states that in his opinion the true number will be found to be less by 2,000 or 3,000.

Your Lordship will easily understand the difficulty of forming even an approximate estimate of the various creeds of which the population of the Mountain is composed. Only one census, and that an imperfect one, has been made for many years, but I have not failed to bring the matter under the notice of my colleagues, in order that the subject may receive the attention it deserves.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure in No. 314.

Statement of the Number of Greeks resident in the Lebanon.

IL y a environ 22,460 Grecs orthodoxes dans la Caimacamiyeh Chrétienne du Liban, et 5,520 dans la Caimacamiyeh Druse; total 27,980 (orthodoxes des deux sexes).

Les principaux centres de la population orthodoxe dans la Caimacamiyeh Chrétienne sont: El Kûra, Kurnet, Belad Jebel, Zahleh avec ses dépendances, et Beskinta avec ses dépendances dans le Metu.

Les principaux centres de la population orthodoxe dans la Caimacamiyeh Druse sont: Shuweifat, avec ses dépendances, et Bhandûn.

La population Chrétienne des districts de l'Anti-Liban, Hasbeya, Rasbeya, et Merj Ayûn, est presque en totalité composée de Grecs orthodoxes.

No. 315.

Major Fraser to Lord J. Russell.—(Received January 11, 1861.)

(No. 14.)

My Lord,

Beyrout, December 29, 1860.

SINCE the date of my last communication to your Lordship, No. 13 of December 2nd, I have been in continued attendance upon Fuad Pasha at this place for the purpose of accompanying his Excellency into the Lebanon, in his

projected expedition for the punishment of the Druses. Various circumstances have tended to cause repeated postponements of this movement.

In the first place, some delay occurred before the exact mode of co-operation on the part of the French troops was satisfactorily arranged, it being extremely desirable that no pains should be spared to prevent their hostile collision with the Druses. This having been at length arranged, and more precise intelligence regarding the actual condition of the Druse population having been subsequently obtained, it was found advisable greatly to reduce the amount of the fine to be exacted from that people, a change necessitating several meetings of the European Commission for the settlement of a new basis. And finally, Fuad Pasha latterly formed the opinion that it would give a better hope of success, and create less alarm, should he forego his intention of superintending in person the arrest of the compromised Druses, and, instead, should depute the duty to the detachment already charged with the levy of the forced contribution, his Excellency only appearing on the scene when the arrests had been completed. This plan has therefore been adopted, and Druses, previously denounced, have now been made prisoners, to the amount of several hundreds. His Excellency has to-day intimated his intention of proceeding without further delay to Mokhtara, whither I propose to accompany him, for the purpose of instituting tribunals for the trial of these men. It is further proposed that those condemned to capital punishment should be executed in the Mountain itself, at or near the scene of their crimes, and that as soon as possible thereafter a general amnesty to the Druse nation be proclaimed, excepting a few notorious culprits at present beyond the reach of justice.

I have made these general remarks solely in order to explain to your Lordship the causes which have detained me from day to day at this place, and by no means as a statement or report of local events. Having had the advantage of daily intercourse with Lord Dufferin for some time past, I am aware how impossible it would be for me to add to his Lordship's valuable and comprehensive communications on all such subjects.

Since my arrival here, I have occasionally conversed with Fuad Pasha on a variety of topics, and have invariably communicated anything of consequence to Lord Dufferin at the moment. His Excellency being apparently of opinion that the future Government of Syria is likely to be committed to his care, has repeatedly adverted to the improvements which might be introduced in both the civil and military administration of the province. At his request I have explained in detail the various forms of government existing in British Colonies, and more particularly the administrative and defensive system now in use on the Kaffir frontier in South Africa, with which I happen to be familiar, where a state of affairs formerly existed very closely resembling the present condition of the Eastern or Bedouin frontier of Syria; and there appears little reason to doubt that results equally favourable might be obtained here, by the adoption of a system analogous to that employed with so much advantage in South Africa.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. J. FRASER.

No. 316.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received January 12.)

(No. 63.)

My Lord,

Paris, January 11, 1861.

THE answer which M. Thouvenel has returned to the communication made to him from the Prussian Government relative to the affairs of Syria, alluded to in my despatch No. 40 of the 8th instant, is to the effect that he cannot discuss the future government of that province with individual Governments; that an European Commission has been sent to Syria for the very purpose of examining into that question upon the spot, and that he is content to leave it to their decision; and, finally, that as far as his personal opinion is concerned, he approves the bases laid down in the plan suggested by Lord Dufferin to his colleagues.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

No. 317.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received January 12.)

(No. 65.)

My Lord,

Paris, January 11, 1861.

I HAVE read to M. Thouvenel, in pursuance of the instructions contained in it, your Lordship's despatch No. 50 of the 9th instant, relating to the affairs of Syria, and to the withdrawal of the French troops from thence.

A conversation of some warmth ensued between his Excellency and myself. In the first place, M. Thouvenel remarked that the reports of M. Bécclard and of Lord Dufferin, as to what had passed at the unofficial conference of the 17th ultimo, did not coincide. His Excellency sent for M. Bécclard's report, which he read to me, and which certainly makes both the Russian and Prussian Commissioners to hold very positive language as to the necessity of a prolonged stay of the French troops; the expressions, also, of the Austrian Commissioner, according to M. Bécclard, implied rather a hope than an expectation that their presence might be dispensed with at the end of six months.

With regard to M. Bécclard himself, he describes himself as having, after hearing the different opinions pronounced, and expressing his leaning towards those of Russia and Prussia, remarked that the best mode to render the evacuation certain, would be to proceed in the attempt to constitute a proper Government in the Lebanon, and thus render the further presence of foreign troops unnecessary.

M. Thouvenel remarked to me that in this last observation of M. Bécclard he entirely agreed; but he intimated, at the same time, his conviction that in the present state of the Ottoman Empire, a strong Government in the Lebanon would be found impossible of realisation. He went on to say, that the intention of the Imperial Government was, after the arrival of the next mail from Syria, to address simultaneously to all the great Courts a despatch, calling attention to the Convention of the 5th September, and asking their opinion as to the withdrawal of the troops. The Imperial Government will express no opinion one way or the other, but will be guided in its conduct by the answers which may be returned.

I observed, that no opinions of one Government or another could overrule the stipulations of a Treaty, and that the six months of occupation expired, the French Government would be bound, in good faith, to bring away the troops.

M. Thouvenel did not contest this point, but he said that as he believed in his soul and conscience ("dans son âme et conscience") that the withdrawal of the troops would be followed by a massacre far more extensive than that for which we were now asking redress, or else by a combination of all sects and creeds against the Sultan's authority, the Imperial Government would not take the responsibility of acting alone.

The conversation having turned upon the conduct and proceedings of General Beaufort, to which, I said, I attributed, in a great measure, the evils which would attend a prolonged occupation of Syria, M. Thouvenel replied, that he could not admit that any blame attached to officer; that, on the contrary, General Beaufort had acted with a moderation, a tact, and a consideration for Fuad Pasha which was beyond all praise. He was quite certain that no other officer would have put up with the want of courtesy which had been evinced towards him by the Turkish authorities.

I replied, that such might be General Beaufort's representation of his own case, but that I had seen other accounts which convinced me that had he been allowed to follow his own inclinations, the peace of Syria might have been again compromised. I had no wish, I said, to throw unmerited blame on a French officer, who, no doubt, was anxious for an opportunity of distinguishing himself; but it was never meant, I contended, that the part which he was to play should be an active one, or that he should have any independent authority in a province belonging to Turkey.

The conversation continued in this strain for some little time, M. Thouvenel professing that the Emperor's greatest desire was to bring away his troops as soon as possible, but urging the necessity of the establishment of a Government in the Lebanon before this could be effected.

I recommended that the French troops should, at all events, be withdrawn

from the interior, and as soon as possible concentrated at Beyrout; their presence in the Mountain having no other effect than to excite the Maronites and irritate the Druses.

With regard to the absence of Fuad Pasha from the Conference at which the evacuation of Syria was discussed, on which your Lordship comments, M. Thouvenel observed that it was Fuad Pasha's own doing, he having excused himself from attending.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

No. 318.

Lord J. Russell to Lord Dufferin.

(No. 61.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, January 14, 1861.

I HAVE received a copy of your Lordship's despatch No. 92 of the 30th ultimo to Sir H. Bulwer, inclosing a copy of a communication which you had addressed to the several members of the European Commission on the subject of the punishment to be inflicted on the Druse nation; and I have to state to you in reply, that Her Majesty's Government approve of the views which you expressed in that communication.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 319.

Mr. Lowther to Lord J. Russell.—(Received January 14.)

(No. 24.)

My Lord,

Berlin, January 12, 1861.

I CONVERSED this morning with Baron Schleinitz on the substance of the inclosures in your Lordship's despatch to me No. 10, relative to the affairs of Syria.

His Excellency informed me he had latterly been so much occupied that he had really not had time to give the subject the attention the question deserved, but that it appeared to him the time was hardly yet come for the withdrawal of the troops.

I then read to him some extracts of your Lordship's despatch No. 50 of the 9th of January to Earl Cowley, concluding with the remark it contains, "that before the end of this month the British, French, Austrian, Prussian, and Turkish Commissioners will have formally agreed to the fifteen Articles proposed by Lord Dufferin and M. Bédard."

His Excellency said he was not aware that the Commissioners had already made so much progress in their business; that he was no advocate for the prolonged stay of foreign troops in Syria; that the Commissioners on the spot were best able to judge of the question of whether authority was sufficiently restored to allow them to be withdrawn; that if the proper moment had not arrived, those who undertook to recommend the withdrawal were taking upon themselves a very great responsibility.

I then told him Her Majesty's Government were willing to undertake their share of this responsibility, provided the Ministers of the Porte understood on their part their obligations and risks, and I spoke in the sense of your Lordship's despatch No. 2 to Sir Henry Bulwer.

Baron Schleinitz requested me to leave with him your Lordship's despatch No. 50 of the 9th instant to Earl Cowley. This I declined to do, but I said I would venture to give him some extracts of that despatch which I had read to him, if he thought they would be of use to him.

I did this under the firm conviction that the objects of Her Majesty's

Government would thereby be advanced, and I trust that my having done so will not meet with your Lordship's disapproval.

I have the honour to inclose herewith a copy of the extracts I gave Baron Schleinitz.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WILLIAM LOWTHER.

Inclosure in No. 319.

Lord J. Russell to Earl Cowley.

(Extract.)

YOUR Excellency will see, from the copy which I sent you in my despatch No. 23 of the 5th instant, that the Austrian Commissioner, speaking on the 19th of December, said that he saw no reason to think that the presence of a foreign force would be necessary two months from that time. You will see that Lord Dufferin expressed his opinion that the foreign force had become an embarrassment to the Sultan's Government; that it was discharging police duties, which were no part of its mission; and that it might be sent away at once without risk.

The French and Russian Commissioners were in favour of the prolonged stay of the foreign troops. The Russian Commissioner was not prepared to say that it would be safe to remove the troops, but Lord Dufferin seemed to expect that his opinion would change on further consideration.

Lord Dufferin relates that the Christian communities had asked, through their Bishops, for 4,500 of the heads of their enemies. This is the manner in which these Christian Bishops in the East preach "peace on earth and goodwill towards men."

The French Government proposed in July last that European troops should be sent to Syria. Her Majesty's Government consented on two conditions: first, that the foreign troops should act in concert with the Turkish Commissioner, Fuad Pasha; and, secondly, that the stay of the foreign troops should not be prolonged beyond six months. It was on the strength of these two conditions that Her Majesty's Government urged upon the Porte the acceptance of foreign aid to tranquillize Syria; it was on the faith of these conditions that the Porte gave her reluctant consent.

It is true that if Her Majesty's Government were convinced that there would be great risks in removing the foreign troops from Syria, Her Majesty's Government might be induced to urge upon the Porte a postponement of the evacuation. But as the conviction of Her Majesty's Government is quite the other way, it is impossible for Her Majesty's Government to consent to the prolongation of the stay of the French troops in Syria beyond the time fixed by the Convention of the 8th of August.

I have only further to say, that all the Commissioners except the Russian appear to be agreed upon the general heads of an arrangement for the future government of Syria. There seems every reason to hope that before the end of this month, the British, French, Austrian, Prussian, and Turkish Commissioners will have formally agreed to the fifteen Articles proposed by Lord Dufferin and M. Bédard. There will then remain no reason whatever for extending the period for which the Convention of August 8 authorizes the stay of foreign troops in Syria.

No. 320.

Mr. Fane to Lord J. Russell.—(Received January 14.)

(No. 26.)

My Lord,

Vienna, January 9, 1861.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 192 of the 27th of December last, I inquired of Count Rechberg whether he was prepared to communicate to me his views on Lord Dufferin's plan for the future settlement of the province of Syria.

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His Excellency said that Lord Dufferin's memorandum appeared to him to be drawn up with remarkable ability, but there were several points in it upon which he had observations to make. These observations he was about to embody in a despatch to Baron Prokesch, and he would forward a copy of that despatch to Count Apponyi, with instructions to communicate it to your Lordship, which he thought would be the best mode of bringing his views upon the subject accurately before Her Majesty's Government.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JULIAN FANE.

No. 321.

Lord Dufferin to Lord J. Russell:—(Received January 16.)

(No. 49.)

My Lord,

Beyrout, January 4, 1861.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Lordship's information, copies of further despatches which I have addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at the Porte.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 321.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, December 31, 1860.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Excellency's despatch of the 12th instant, and I beg most respectfully to thank your Excellency for the indulgent terms in which you are good enough to allude to the views I have ventured to submit to your consideration respecting the future government of Syria.

I will endeavour, to the best of my ability, to convey to my colleagues an exact notion of the opinions your Excellency entertains in regard to the principles by which our future proceedings ought to be guided; and I feel convinced that they will not fail to recognize their force and justice.

It might be presumptuous in me were I to say how heartily I myself concur in them, but I cannot refrain from recording the obligations I am under to your Excellency for having in so considerate a manner corroborated my private views by your great authority, and encouraged me to withstand, with due persistence, the somewhat prejudicial and violent courses advocated by what has been too often a majority of my colleagues.

I need scarcely add how opportune a circumstance I should consider it if, as your Excellency suggests, the Porte would now come forward of her own accord, and propose through the medium of Fuad Pasha a carefully digested scheme for the future administration of the province, based upon the principles which have had the good fortune to be approved of by your Excellency, and which, unless objected to by their Governments, are likely to meet with unanimous acceptance at the hands of my colleagues.

It seems to me almost hopeless to expect that a final conclusion can be arrived at in any other way. It is scarcely advisable that the Commissioners should do more than submit to their respective Governments the outlines of their plan for the future administration of the province. These general recommendations once accepted, the elaboration of all details should be left to those most interested in making the new machinery work well.

There can be little doubt that such a task can be better performed by Fuad Pasha and his advisers than by five European gentlemen but very imperfectly acquainted with the country, and whose interference will, probably, become mischievous the moment they descend from general principles into the intricacies of administrative detail.

The action of such a body ought to be confined to revision of the plan devised by the responsible authorities of the Empire, in order to ensure its construction being in accordance with the spirit of the stipulated conditions.

By this means a result will be arrived at which will, probably, prove the most beneficial to the country and the most acceptable to the Porte.

In conclusion, I will merely beg leave to state, in explanation of the views which, from time to time, I have had the honour of laying before your Excellency that it has always seemed to me that the disconnection of Syria from the Porte ought to be of a nature to admit the proposed improvements in the civil and fiscal administration of the province, without hereafter preventing its re-incorporation in the Empire, should the day arrive when a strong and capable Government shall be established at Constantinople.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 2 in No. 321.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, January 1, 1860.

HAVING already had the honour of submitting to your Excellency's consideration a scheme for the general government of the Province of Syria, I propose in this despatch to make a few remarks on the administration of the Lebanon in particular.

Were we actuated by no other considerations than such as regard the tranquillity of the Mountain, I have no hesitation in saying that the only sensible plan would be to deprive its inhabitants of all their anomalous privileges, and to place them under the immediate control of the Turkish Ruler of the province. There is no room for any difference of opinion upon this point. All the bloodshed which has taken place during the last twenty-five years would have been spared had the jurisdiction of the Turks over the Lebanon been unlimited. The various elements which compose its population are incapable of governing either each other or themselves. While perpetual strife has deluged the Mixed Districts with blood, an internecine warfare between the peasantry and their feudal Chiefs has rendered the Christian Kesrouan the theatre of anarchy and crimes not less sanguinary. The important town of Zahleh is always in a state of chronic rebellion against the authority of its Maronite Kaimakam, and the Greek Christians of the Southern Lebanon have shown themselves as ready to fly at the throats of their unorthodox co-religionists as any of their Pagan neighbours.

The independence, therefore, of the Lebanon is an arrangement quite incompatible with good government, and any endeavour to extend the domination of the Maronites over either their Greek or Druse fellow-subjects is a policy as cruel as it is impracticable.

On the other hand, to propose that the intervention of Europe on behalf of those whose misfortunes have excited so much sympathy should become an occasion for dispoiling them of their privileges, and handing them over in a still more defenceless condition to the tender mercies of their persecutors, would probably excite the indignant opposition of Catholic Christendom.

It was the consideration of these circumstances that induced me to propose the consolidation of the Lebanon into a single Pashalic, administered by a Christian nominee of the central authority, as the happiest means of reconciling the practical with the sentimental exigencies of the situation.

By such an expedient an extension of jurisdiction will be accorded to the Christian name, the exclusive privileges of the Maronites will be abolished, and an opportunity will be afforded of emancipating the Greek minority from the hateful ascendancy of a rival rite.

As the official attributes of the officer appointed to rule the Mountain will differ in no respect from those of any other subordinate Pasha of the Province, as the Governor-General will select him, and as his continuance in office will depend upon the good pleasure of the central authority, there is little danger of his becoming any impediment to the exercise by the Government at Damascus of that intimate and supreme control over the Lebanon which alone can insure its tranquillity; while the fact of his being elevated, as we may suppose he will be, by education, by knowledge of the world, and by difference of race, above

the petty animosities of the barbarous sects he is called upon to govern, will ensure to his administration the necessary degree of liberal impartiality.

I do not imagine that there would be any difficulty in finding among the European subjects of the Porte a class of persons suited to the post, and I might even go so far as to point out Ismail Pasha, General Kmety, as an example of the facility with which a proper selection might be made.

Side by side with the Christian Pasha of the Lebanon it will be necessary to erect a system of legal and municipal Councils, so constituted as to give to each race and right a due share in the administration of their local affairs. It is here that we shall find the opportunity of securing to the Druses so much of their ancient jurisdiction as is compatible with the new system established in the Province, as well as of extending to the Greek community, hitherto most unjustly overlooked, that equality in the civil administration of the Mountain to which their numbers and their respectability entitle them.

Such is the plan which appears to me most likely to reconcile the conflicting interests we are bound to consult.

By this arrangement, a reasonable satisfaction will be given to Catholic opinion in France, the pernicious ascendancy of the Maronite sect will be broken, the counterpoise to be found in the Greek element will have been evoked, the civil independence of the Druses will be preserved, and the control of the Central Government will be rendered as complete and irresistible in the Mountain as in any other portion of its territory.

By no other means, I think, could similar results be obtained. Did we propose to extend Turkish rule unconditionally to the Lebanon, not only would France and Russia protest, but even Austria and all the Catholic Governments of Europe would cry out.

To leave the two Kaimakamships in possession of their ancient attributes would have the appearance of making out to the demon of discord a fresh lease of the Mountain, while the surrender of the Mixed districts to the Turks, unaccompanied by any diminution of the privileges of the Maronites, to which the French would never consent, though the least objectionable of the three, would prove but a slight improvement on the old system.

The perfect assimilation of the Administration of the Lebanon to that of the rest of the Province, under the jurisdiction of a Christian Pasha, completely subordinate to the Central authority, would seem, therefore, to be the only arrangement really practicable, but I would wish particularly to observe, that even this solution of the difficulty can be only safely accepted by Her Majesty's Government on the condition that France shall enter with good faith into the scheme, and, in consideration of the securities afforded by the new Government of the Province to all classes of Syrian Christians, abandon the idea of preserving, by any statistical jugglery, the exclusive ascendancy of her Maronite protégés.

Before concluding, I would wish to examine very briefly the manner in which the Druses will be affected by these changes. In consenting to the abolition of their Kaimakamship, it is possible we may be accused of sacrificing to the fanatical prejudices of Europe, or the ambition of France, the interests of a people between whom and ourselves there have always existed the most friendly relations.

In reply, I would simply observe that, apart from the misfortunes and punishment to which their own barbarous excesses have unavoidably exposed them, the condition of the Druse nation under the new system will probably be preferable to that of their Christian rivals. It is true the administration of the Pashalic will be Christian, but as the dependent nature of his position will ensure his acting in accordance with the views of his Government, and as manifestly it is in the interest of that Government to cherish the Druses of the Lebanon as much as possible, there is no reason to entertain misgivings on their behalf, and this consideration acquires fourfold force when we remember that the alternative they possess of emigrating to the Hauran places them in a position themselves to determine upon what terms they will consent to stay and garrison the Lebanon.

Again, it may be said that by the erection of the Mountain into a Pashalic, the fine old feudal system is destroyed. But it is a mistake to suppose that such a system was anything but a curse to the country. The condition of the Christian serfs under the Druse Mokataajis was very pitiable, and that of the

Druse peasantry no better. Moreover, feudal jurisdiction is incompatible with regular government, and if we wish to create an all-powerful central authority at Damascus, it can only be done by converting the irresponsible Chieftains of the Mountain into duly subordinated officials. Under any circumstances, the Druse villages will be governed by their native Sheikhs, and in the Mixed districts they will still retain a proportional share of administrative power. The same observations would apply with equal force to the Christian Mokataas, had not the system already broken down in that part of the Lebanon.

Lastly, it may be urged that the solution I have recommended, crowns with success the unlawful ambition of France. Such an objection is unfounded, and I have no hesitation in saying that if once the proposed arrangements were concluded, the political influence of France in Syria will have received its death-blow. Hitherto Turkey, excluded from the Lebanon, and reduced to the only resource left to weak Governments on such occasions, has endeavoured to counteract the aggressive policy of France by seeking to use the Druses as a check on the encroachments of her disaffected Maronites. Unfortunately the Porte did not possess the skill necessary to wield so clumsy and dangerous an instrument. The weapon has broken in her hand, and inflicted a wound which years, perhaps, will fail to heal. Under these circumstances a change of system has become necessary, and it seems to me that for the future the encroachments of foreign influence in Syria will be more effectually and more legitimately baffled by placing the Provincial Government in a position to exercise a supreme and effectual control over all its subjects, than by any endeavour to counterbalance the factitious pretensions of one savage tribe by pampering the independence and stimulating to madness the worst passions of another.

I have, &c.

(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

No. 322.

Aali Pasha to M. Musurus.—(Communicated to Lord J. Russell by M. Musurus, January 16.)

Constantinople, le 9 Janvier, 1861.

IL résulte d'une dépêche de Lord John Russell, dont l'Ambassadeur d'Angleterre vient de me donner communication, que le Gouvernement Britannique approuve le plan soumis par son Commissaire sur l'organisation future de la Syrie. D'après ce plan, il ne s'agirait de rien moins que de l'érection d'une Vice-royauté à l'instar de l'Egypte et des Provinces Danubiennes. Il nous est absolument impossible soit d'adhérer à cette proposition, soit d'admettre la compétence de la Commission Européenne dans cette matière.

Je viens d'exposer à l'Ambassadeur Anglais, et je vous ferai connaître par le courrier prochain, le système militaire et administratif par l'établissement duquel nous pouvons seulement nous rendre responsables de l'avenir de la Syrie.

No. 323.

Aali Pasha to M. Musurus.—(Communicated to Lord J. Russell by M. Musurus, January 16.)

Constantinople, le 9 Janvier, 1861.

LE projet de Lord Dufferin, embrassant toute la Syrie, et la constituant en un Etat séparé, ne pourra être accepté par la Sublime Porte.

Vous savez que nous avons toujours maintenu le principe de n'admettre l'intervention de la Commission Européenne que dans l'organisation du Mont Liban, et cela dans les limites des arrangements de 1845. Je vous enverrai sous peu notre plan concernant la future administration de la Syrie, plan dont on sera, nous n'en doutons pas, parfaitement satisfait. Vous verrez que le dit

plan du Gouvernement Impérial, sans avoir les inconvénients ou plutôt les graves dangers de l'opinion émise par le Commissaire Britannique, permet les mêmes garanties à l'égard des Chrétiens.

No. 324.

Lord J. Russell to Mr. Fane.

(No. 14.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, January 16, 1861.

THE question of the further occupation of Syria by the forces of a European Power has become one of so much importance, both as a question of principle and as a question bearing on the tranquillity and prosperity of Syria, that I must desire you to request Count Rechberg to give it his most serious attention.

By a Convention signed in August last, at a moment when Europe had been shocked and disgusted by the accounts of the Syrian massacres, the principal Powers of Europe agreed to send to the assistance of the Sultan, in order to restore tranquillity, 12,000 troops, of whom one-half were to be furnished immediately by France.

The Sultan was a party to this Convention, but his Ministers declared openly that his assent was given rather in deference to the opinions and wishes of Europe than from any belief in the necessity or the efficiency of the remedy proposed.

The Convention, and the occupation which it sanctioned, were to endure for six months, and thus expire, therefore, in the month of February next. From the day when that Convention expires, the right of foreign troops to occupy a part of the Sultan's territory expires also.

For the last two months the Ambassador of the Porte in London has been urging upon Her Majesty's Government, by order of the Sultan, the obligation of the European Powers not to continue the occupation of Syria beyond the time fixed by the Convention.

Conceiving this request to be perfectly reasonable, I gave it the support of Her Majesty's Government at Paris, and received from the Ambassador of the Emperor in London the assurance that the Commander of the French troops would receive orders to conform to the terms of the Convention, leaving to Her Majesty's Government the responsibility of recommending the evacuation. This responsibility, I stated, Her Majesty's Government were quite willing to incur.

Soon after this, however, a new incident occurred. Intelligence was received both at Paris and in London, to the effect that M. Bédard, the Commissioner of France, had submitted the question of the evacuation to the judgment of the Commissioners of Great Britain, Austria, Prussia, and Russia.

According to our accounts, the Commissioners of Great Britain and Austria declared their opinion to be that, at the end of February, the evacuation might be effected without risk. According to the French report, the opinion of the Austrian Commissioner was not quite so decided. There appears no doubt that the Commissioners of Prussia and Russia expressed their fear that if the foreign troops were withdrawn, the massacres might be renewed. The Turkish Commissioner, the President of the Commission, was absent.

Upon this report the French Government hesitated, and M. Thouvenel has declared his wish to consult the Powers who were parties to the Convention.

The first thing which occurs to Her Majesty's Government upon this subject is, that the terms of the Convention are clear and precise. The Sultan has relied upon them, and would justly impute to the Powers of Europe a breach of faith if they were departed from.

But, in the next place, what is the case for asking the Sultan to extend the Convention for a further period?

Aali Pasha, in his communication to M. Musurus, represents the Maronites and Druses as divided not so much by differences of religion as by political animosities. Each party, violent in its antipathy, he declares wishes to exterminate the other, and these animosities are not assuaged, but inflamed, by the presence of foreign troops believed to be favourable to one of the two rival parties.

I must say that this representation is borne out by the facts, and by the statements of Her Majesty's Commissioner in Syria.

It appears that, from time to time, massacres and murders have desolated the district of the Lebanon. Maronites have been as forward in acts of cruel revenge, and in the indulgence of hatred, as the Druses. Before the massacres of 1860, the Maronites, under the guidance of one of their Bishops, had been preparing arms to a large extent, and were evidently meditating war upon the Druses. Since the French occupation, Maronites have followed the march of the French troops; and when they lit upon a helpless Druse old man or woman alone, have murdered them without mercy. Some twenty or thirty Druses, it is said, were put to death in cold blood by the Maronites during the first advance of the French troops.

At a later period a tax was proposed, and had even been sanctioned at one moment, imposing a payment upon every Druse taxpayer equal to the whole amount of a peasant's yearly income. Had it been persisted in, the Druse peasantry must have abandoned their property, and fled from their dwellings. This, in fact, seems to have been the object sought.

Again when the punishment of the Druses was in question, the Christian sects, through their Bishops, demanded that out of 8,000 adult Druses, 4,800 heads should be given to them to satiate their vengeance; so little has the doctrine of forgiveness of injuries been imbibed by these Maronite bishops and their flocks.

In fact, though nominally Christians, they are in reality a fierce and barbarous race. They seek the extermination of a hostile tribe, and Her Majesty's Government cannot think that the idolatry and superstition of that tribe justify the Powers of Europe in promoting or consenting to their extermination.

In conclusion, it is to be remarked that the utmost alleged in favour of continued foreign occupation is an apprehension in the minds of the Christians of danger to them after the departure of the foreign troops. That apprehension, of course, cannot be removed by any reasonings. Since Fuad Pasha went to Syria no massacres have been committed there. But it is in the nature of foreign occupation to keep alive an apprehension of the dangers which that occupation professes to prevent; and thus, if such apprehensions were to be admitted as reasons for the continuance of foreign occupation, that occupation would, by the effect which it produces, have a tendency to perpetuate itself.

Thus, if the French occupation of Syria were to be prolonged, we should probably find the apprehensions of the Syrian Maronites as strong in 1871 as they are in 1861; unless, indeed, in the mean time, under the protection of the Christian Powers, they had succeeded in exterminating the whole of the inhabitants of the Mountain who are not of their own party.

For these reasons, therefore, Her Majesty's Government are unable to join in any representations to the Porte, with a view of renewing the term of foreign occupation in Syria. As to any resolution on the part of the Powers of Europe to retain a European force in Syria without the assent of the Sultan, that would clearly be an act of war, and is not to be thought of by Powers who profess to entertain towards Turkey sentiments of friendship, and who have together united in guaranteeing her integrity and independence.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

P.S.—You may read this despatch to Count Rechberg, but you are not to give his Excellency a copy of it.

No. 325.

Lord J. Russell to M. Lowther.

(No. 16.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, January 16, 1860.

THE question of the further occupation of Syria by the forces of a European Power has become one of so much importance, both as a question of principle and as a question bearing on the tranquillity and prosperity of Syria, that I must desire you to request Baron Schleinitz to give it his most serious attention.

By a Convention signed in August last, at a moment when Europe had

been shocked and disgusted by the accounts of the Syrian massacres, the principal Powers of Europe agreed to send to the assistance of the Sultan, in order to restore tranquillity, 12,000 troops, of whom one-half were to be furnished immediately by France.

The Sultan was a party to this Convention, but his Ministers declared openly that his assent was given rather in deference to the opinions and wishes of Europe than from any belief in the necessity or the efficiency of the remedy proposed.

The Convention, and the occupation which it sanctioned, were to endure for six months, and thus expire, therefore, in the month of February next. From the day when that Convention expires, the right of foreign troops to occupy a part of the Sultan's territory expires also.

For the last two months the Ambassador of the Porte in London has been urging upon Her Majesty's Government, by order of the Sultan, the obligation of the European Powers not to continue the occupation of Syria beyond the time fixed by the Convention.

Conceiving this request to be perfectly reasonable, I gave it the support of Her Majesty's Government at Paris, and received from the Ambassador of the Emperor in London the assurance that the Commander of the French troops would receive orders to conform to the terms of the Convention, leaving to Her Majesty's Government responsibility of recommending the evacuation. This responsibility, I stated, Her Majesty's Government were quite willing to incur.

Soon after this, however, a new incident occurred. Intelligence was received, both at Paris and in London, to the effect that M. Bécarré, the Commissioner of France, had submitted the question of the evacuation to the judgment of the Commissioners of Great Britain, Austria, Prussia, and Russia.

According to our accounts, the Commissioners of Great Britain and Austria declared their opinion to be that at the end of February the evacuation might be effected without risk. According to the French report, the opinion of the Austrian Commissioner was not quite so decided. There appears no doubt that the Commissioners of Prussia and Russia expressed their fear that if the foreign troops were withdrawn, the massacres might be renewed. The Turkish Commissioner, the President of the Commission, was absent.

Upon this report the French Government hesitated, and M. Thouvenel has declared his wish to consult the Powers who were parties to the Convention.

The first thing which occurs to Her Majesty's Government upon this subject is, that the terms of the Convention are clear and precise. The Sultan has relied upon them, and would justly impute to the Powers of Europe a breach of faith if they were departed from.

But in the next place, what is the case for asking the Sultan to extend the Convention for a further period?

Aali Pasha, in his communications to M. Musurus, represents the Maronites and Druses as divided not so much by differences of religion as by political animosities. Each party, violent in its antipathy, he declares, wishes to exterminate the other; and these animosities are not assuaged, but inflamed, by the presence of foreign troops believed to be favourable to one of the two rival parties.

I must say that this representation is borne out by the facts, and by the statements of Her Majesty's Commissioner in Syria.

It appears that from time to time massacres and murders have desolated the district of the Lebanon. Maronites have been as forward in acts of cruel revenge, and in the indulgence of hatred, as the Druses. Before the massacres of 1860 the Maronites, under the guidance of one of their Bishops, had been preparing arms to a large extent, and were evidently meditating war upon the Druses. Since the French occupation Maronites have followed the march of the French troops, and when they lit upon a helpless Druse old man or woman alone, have murdered them without mercy. Some twenty or thirty Druses, it is said, were put to death in cold blood by the Maronites during the first advance of the French troops.

At a later period a tax was proposed, and had even been sanctioned at one moment, imposing a payment upon every Druse tax-payer equal to the whole amount of a peasant's yearly income. Had it been persisted in, the Druse peasantry must have abandoned their property, and fled from their dwellings. This, in fact, seems to have been the object sought.

Again, when the punishment of the Druses was in question, the Christian sects, through their Bishops, demanded, that out of 8,000 adult Druses 4,800 heads should be given to them, to satiate their vengeance; so little has the doctrine of forgiveness of injuries been imbibed by these Maronite Bishops and their flocks.

In fact, though nominally Christians, they are in reality a fierce and barbarous race. They seek the extermination of a hostile tribe; and Her Majesty's Government cannot think that the idolatry and superstition of that tribe justify the Powers of Europe in promoting or consenting to their extermination.

In conclusion, it is to be remarked that the utmost alleged in favour of continued foreign occupation is an apprehension in the minds of the Christians of danger to them after the departure of the foreign troops. That apprehension of course cannot be removed by any reasonings. Since Fuad Pasha went to Syria no massacres have been committed there. But it is in the nature of foreign occupation to keep alive an apprehension of the dangers which that occupation professes to prevent, and thus, if such apprehensions were to be admitted as reasons for the continuance of foreign occupation, that occupation would, by the effect which it produces, have a tendency to perpetuate itself.

Thus, if the French occupation of Syria were to be prolonged, we should probably find the apprehensions of the Syrian Maronites as strong in 1871 as they are in 1861; unless, indeed, in the meantime, under the protection of the Christian Powers, they had succeeded in exterminating the whole of the inhabitants of the Mountain who are not of their own party.

For these reasons, therefore, Her Majesty's Government are unable to join in any representations to the Porte with a view of renewing the term of foreign occupation in Syria. As to any resolution on the part of the Powers of Europe to retain a European force in Syria without the assent of the Sultan, that would clearly be an act of war, and is not to be thought of by Powers who profess to entertain towards Turkey sentiments of friendship, and who have together united in guaranteeing her integrity and independence.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

P. S.—You may read this despatch to Baron Schleinitz, but you are not to give him a copy of it.

No. 326.

Lord J. Russell to Mr. Lowther.

(No. 17. Confidential.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, January 16, 1861.

I SEND you a copy of an instruction which the Prussian Minister of Foreign Affairs has sent to the Prussian Minister at Paris.*

As we agree with the Governments of France and Prussia that the discussions on Syrian affairs ought to take place in Syria, it is needless to enter into any discussion with the Prussian Government on this subject.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 327.

Lord J. Russell to Mr. Lowther.

(No. 22.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, January 16, 1861.

I HAVE received your despatch No. 24 of the 12th instant, reporting your conversation with Baron Schleinitz upon your communicating to his Excellency the substance of my despatch No. 16 to you upon the affairs of Syria; and I

* No. 312.

have to inform you, in reply, that I approve of the language you used upon that occasion, and of your having left with his Excellency extracts of my despatch to Lord Cowley upon this subject.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 328.

Lord J. Russell to Earl Cowley.

(No. 64.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, January 16, 1861.

I GATHER from your Excellency's despatch No. 65 of the 11th instant that M. Thouvenel agrees with M. Béchard that the best way of rendering the evacuation of Syria certain, is to establish a proper government for the Lebanon, but that, in his Excellency's opinion, the establishment of a strong government in the Lebanon is, in the present state of the Turkish Empire, impossible.

If a proper government and a strong government are to be taken in this instance as synonymous, it would seem to follow that, in his Excellency's opinion, Syria ought to be occupied by French troops till an impossible condition is fulfilled—in other words, for ever.

But is this really M. Thouvenel's meaning? I should hope not. But it is necessary that this point should be cleared up.

Your Excellency will see, by a telegram from Sir Henry Bulwer, that the Porte has it in contemplation to keep 25,000 regular troops in Syria, and to appropriate 200,000*l.* for re-building houses and furnishing an indemnity for Christians in Syria.

If, with these offers, the Sultan couples a demand for the faithful execution of the Convention made in August last, and ratified on the 5th of September, Her Majesty's Government conceive that it will be impossible for the French Government to resist that demand. For France is bound by her Treaty obligations to evacuate Syria when the time has expired during which the Treaty authorizes her to remain, unless all the Contracting Parties to that Treaty should agree, by a fresh diplomatic document, to extend that period. I will not contemplate the case of so violent an infringement of the rights of the Sultan as would be involved in the occupation of his territory by foreign force against his will.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 329.

Lord J. Russell to Earl Cowley.

(No. 66. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, January 16, 1861.

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 40, Confidential, of the 8th instant, reporting a communication which had been made to you by Count Pourtales, in which he appears to have expressed the dissent of his Government to the extended powers which Lord Dufferin's plan for the future government of Syria would confer upon the Governor-General of that province.

Lord Dufferin has, however, fully considered all the objections to which Count Pourtales alludes.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 330.

Lord J. Russell to Earl Cowley.

(No. 67.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, January 16, 1861.

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 63 of the 11th instant, reporting the substance of the answer which has been returned by M. Thouvenel to the communication made to him from the Prussian Government relative to the affairs of Syria.

Your Excellency will perceive by my despatch No. 17, Confidential, to Mr. Lowther of this day's date, of which a copy is inclosed,* that Her Majesty's Government have returned a similar reply to representations made to them by the Government of Prussia upon this subject.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 331.

Lord J. Russell to Sir H. Bulwer.

(No. 27.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, January 16, 1861.

I HAVE received from Lord Dufferin a copy of his despatch to your Excellency of the 23rd ultimo, respecting the course which Fuad Pasha is pursuing in confiscating the estates of Druse Chiefs and of other persons belonging to that community; and I have to state to your Excellency that Her Majesty's Government consider it very desirable that you should call the attention of the Porte to the injustice and inexpediency of this measure.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 332.

Lord J. Russell to Sir H. Bulwer.

(No. 31.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, January 17, 1861.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 2 of the 1st instant, giving you an account of a conversation which I had had with the French Ambassador respecting the evacuation of Syria by the French troops, I inclose, for your Excellency's information, copies of correspondence which I have since had with Earl Cowley on the same subject.†

I likewise inclose a copy of a despatch which I have addressed to Her Majesty's Chargés d'Affaires at Berlin and Vienna,‡ directing them to call the serious attention of the Prussian and Austrian Governments to the question.

Your Excellency will not conceal from the Porte the opinion of Her Majesty's Government as to the propriety and expediency of the retirement of the French troops from Syria at the period stipulated for in the Convention. But although a knowledge of this opinion may serve to support the Turkish Government in resisting any attempts which may be made on the part of other Powers to induce it to consent to the stay of the French troops being prolonged, you will be careful, in your communications with the Porte, to avoid pressing it, against its own inclination, to insist upon the retirement of the occupying force.

The Turkish Government may not feel itself equal to defend the Christians after the departure of the foreign troops, and it might therefore, if left to act for itself, shrink from insisting upon a fulfilment of the terms of the Convention;

* No. 326.

† Nos. 309, 310, 317, and 328.

‡ Nos. 324 and 325.

but it might not hesitate to adopt and favour a measure for which it is very anxious, if it felt that it could relieve itself from any responsibility for consequences by alleging that it had acted in deference to the urgently expressed desire of the British Government.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 333.

Lord J. Russell to Sir H. Bulwer.

(No. 37.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, January 17, 1861.

I TRANSMIT for your Excellency's information copies of two papers which have been communicated to me by the Turkish Ambassador,* containing the Porte's refusal to adopt Lord Dufferin's plan for the future government of Syria.

I am &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 334.

Sir H. Bulwer to Lord J. Russell.—(Received January 18.)

(No. 26.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, January 9, 1861.

YOUR Lordship wishes to know what security the Porte can give, on the withdrawal of the French troops from Syria, for the maintenance of tranquillity and the necessary protection to the Christians. I have had a long conversation with his Highness Aali Pasha on this subject.

He says that the army in Syria will be maintained at 25,000 regular troops, recruited in four Pashalics, namely, Damascus, Sidon, Aleppo, and Adana; and the revenue of these four provinces will be allotted to the expenses of such troops, with the exception, however, of such portion of the receipts of the Custom-house at Beyrout as is effected to the loans contracted; the amount thus assigned being more than sufficient for the purpose. He adds, that the Irregular Cavalry will be organized, and a police force formed in the towns in which the Christian population will be enrolled.

He says that the rebuilding of the houses of the Christians must depend upon the manner in which the proposed indemnity is raised; and the Porte is now considering the subject, and will, within two or three days, inform me of the result. It seems to Aali Pasha, however, that the tax which M. Outrey proposes to levy on Damascus will be the complete destruction of the city, and will be unjust because it will fall principally on the wealthy inhabitants, who opposed the late disturbances. But I do not enter more fully into this question until I hear more clearly what the Porte determines on.

With respect to the conduct, according to Lord Dufferin's despatches, that has been pursued towards the Druses, his Highness concurs with your Lordship in condemning its excessive severity, and will write to Fuad Pasha on the subject.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY L. BULWER.

* Nos. 322 and 323.

No. 335.

Lord J. Russell to Lord Dufferin.

(No. 62.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, January 18, 1861.

I TRANSMIT, for your Lordship's information, copies of two papers which have been communicated to me by the Turkish Ambassador,* containing the Porte's refusal to adopt your plan for the future government of Syria.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 336.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received January 18.)

(No. 98.)

My Lord,

Paris, January 17, 1861.

I REGRET to find by your Lordship's despatch No. 64 of yesterday's date, that a misapplication of words in my despatch No. 65 of the 11th instant has led your Lordship to conjecture that M. Thouvenel desires to imply that until a strong Government shall be established in the Lebanon, a thing which he thinks incapable of realisation, the occupation of Syria by French troops ought to be continued—in other words, that that occupation should be permanent.

Instead of using the adjective "proper," to which your Lordship adverts as applied to the future Government of the Lebanon, I should have done better to employ the word "responsible."

What M. Thouvenel desired to convey was, that in his opinion the troops ought not to be withdrawn until the future government of the Lebanon shall have settled between Fuad Pasha and the Commissioners of the Great Powers; but, he added in the nature of a remark, that it was his conviction that in the present state of the Ottoman Empire, the government so settled, whatever it might be, would not be a strong or beneficial one.

I may, perhaps, remark here, that as far as I am aware, the Turkish Government has not even hinted to the French Government any desire that at the expiration of the six months stipulated by the Convention of the 5th September, the French troops should be withdrawn. It would be well were the Turkish Ambassador instructed to say, that order and tranquillity being restored in Syria, and the guilty in the late massacres punished, the presence of foreign troops is no longer necessary. A similar communication should be made simultaneously to all the Powers who signed the Convention of the 5th September.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

No. 337.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received January 19.)

(No. 100.)

My Lord,

Paris, January 18, 1861.

M. THOUVENEL informed me this afternoon that the despatch which I stated to your Lordship in my despatch No. 65 of the 11th instant his Excellency was about to address to the Representatives of the Emperor at the great Courts of Europe, with reference to the evacuation of Syria, would be sent off on Monday next. The object of it would be to propose that the Conference should again meet to decide whether the occupation of Syria by foreign troops should be prolonged or not, the French Government not choosing to take upon themselves either the responsibility of continuing it beyond the terms specified by the Convention of the 5th September, or of withdrawing the troops in presence of the certainty which seemed to prevail, that their departure would be

* Nos. 322 and 323.

followed by fresh disasters. The Conference would best decide the question after hearing the opinion of the different Courts.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

No. 338.

Lord J. Russell to Earl Cowley.

(No. 89.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, January 19, 1861.

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 98 of the 17th instant, in explanation of your previous despatch No. 65 of the 11th instant, respecting the language held by M. Thouvenel in regard to the evacuation of Syria.

I have to observe to your Excellency that all I have said about the evacuation of Syria was prompted by the constant, pertinacious, and renewed representations of the Ottoman Ambassador in London, who represented himself as instructed to this effect by Aali Pasha, and read extracts of despatches from that Minister.

I have always said to M. Musurus, that if the Ottoman Government thought the stay of European troops necessary to prevent massacre, Her Majesty's Government would acquiesce in their opinion; if not necessary, it was the duty of the Sultan's Minister for Foreign Affairs to address the Five Powers, to express the opinion of Turkey as to the safety of the Christians in Syria, and to specify the guarantees she would offer to secure them against a renewal of massacre.

Sir Henry Bulwer has been instructed also to say that such a step is essential before Her Majesty's Government can give a final opinion.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 339.

Sir J. Crampton to Lord J. Russell.—(Received January 21.)

(No. 2.)

My Lord

St. Petersburg, January 11, 1861.

IN obedience to the instructions contained in your Lordship's despatch No. 160 of the 18th ultimo, I did not fail to communicate to Prince Gortchakoff Lord Dufferin's despatch to Sir Henry Bulwer, stating his Lordship's views as to the best means of settling the future government of Syria; and I stated to his Excellency that Her Majesty's Government are disposed to view Lord Dufferin's sketch favourably, but that they were disposed to think that, if adopted, the Governor of Syria should be named with the consent of the Five Powers.

When I placed this despatch in Prince Gortchakoff's hands he was pleased to express himself in terms very favourable to Lord Dufferin personally, and he praised the conciliatory manner in which his Lordship had discharged the duties entrusted to him by Her Majesty's Government. Prince Gortchakoff added that the best understanding had subsisted between Lord Dufferin and the Russian Commissioner. His Excellency then promised to give Lord Dufferin's report an attentive perusal, and to state to me frankly his opinion of the views therein set forth.

On my reminding him yesterday of his promise he repeated his favourable expressions in regard to Lord Dufferin, but added, that giving his Lordship credit for the uprightness of his intentions, and for the clearness and honesty of his views in respect to the evils under which the part of the Ottoman Empire in question was labouring, he could not altogether concur with his Lordship in regard to the remedies by which he proposed to meet them. It was not, for instance, to his taste that a Turkish administration should be established where no Turkish administration now existed, as in the case of the southern division of the Mount Lebanon. This, he thought, would aggravate the evils complained of, and could not meet the approval of the Russian Government.

With respect to the choice of a Governor and the enumeration of the qualifications which would be desirable in the person selected for this office, nothing, he said, could be more correct than Lord Dufferin's observations, but they constitute unfortunately a mere theory. Was such a man to be found among the officers or dignitaries of the Porte? It reminded him, his Excellency jocularly remarked, of the receipt for making hare soup, viz., "First, catch a hare." It would, he feared, be difficult to do so on the hunting grounds in question.

"But," continued Prince Gortchakoff, "to speak seriously, all this tends to one result, viz., the establishment of Fuad Pasha as the permanent Governor of Syria. Now as to Fuad Pasha, without wishing to use hard words, I cannot say less than this, that of all the venal creatures who surround the Ottoman Government he is, perhaps, the most venal. He is a perfect leech ('une véritable sangsue'), and what is worse, an intelligent leech ('une sangsue intelligente'). To make him Governor of Syria would be to establish a permanent system of corruption ('la corruption en permanence')."

I have, &c.
(Signed) JOHN F. CRAMPTON.

No. 340.

Mr. Fane to Lord J. Russell.—(Received January 21.)

(No. 47.)

My Lord,

Vienna, January 17, 1861.

I HAD a conversation on Monday last with Count Rechberg on the state of affairs in Syria. I brought to his Excellency's knowledge the general nature of the reports addressed to your Lordship and Sir Henry Bulwer by Lord Dufferin, and I pointed out the conclusive evidence which they furnish of the dangers which would attend a prolongation of the military occupation of the province by France. Her Majesty's Government, I said, if they were convinced that there would be great risks in removing the foreign troops from Syria, might be induced to urge upon the Porte a postponement of the evacuation. But as Lord Dufferin's despatches, and all the information which they received, led Her Majesty's Government to a directly opposite conclusion, they entertained the strongest opinion that the stay of the French troops in Syria should not be prolonged beyond the term fixed by the Convention of the 8th of August.

Count Rechberg said that he thought it highly desirable that the French occupation of Syria should cease at the stipulated period, if this could be done without danger of a renewed massacre of the Christians. He had always disliked the project of a military occupation by France alone, and he would rejoice in seeing the removal of French troops, from what he deemed too close proximity to Egypt, successfully accomplished. He was struck, he observed, by the conflicting tendencies of the reports he received from Syria, and of the language held by the French Ambassador here. The latter dwelt on the obvious necessity of prolonging the foreign military occupation of the province until order and authority were completely restored, while the Austrian Commissioner reported that all the members of the Commission, excepting the Russian, but including the French, were favourable to evacuation at the appointed term.

The Marquis de Moustier said that, in the opinion of his Government, grave disorders would ensue if the French troops were withdrawn; while M. de Weckbecker stated, as reported by Lord Dufferin, that he did not think the presence of a foreign force would be necessary two months subsequent to the date (17th December) of the meeting at which this subject had been discussed at Beyrout.

Count Rechberg said that this opinion of the Austrian Commissioner, which was only of a prospective character, would not justify his Excellency in declaring an absolute conviction that the withdrawal of foreign troops from Syria at the expiration of the Convention could be effected with complete safety, although he inclined to the adoption of that opinion.

Count Rechberg said, lastly, in answer to a suggestion of mine, that he was most strongly of opinion that, in any case, the occupation of Syria by French

troops must not be prolonged for a day beyond the appointed term, without the sanction and authority of the Powers who had signed the Convention of the 8th of August.

I was anxious to elicit an unequivocal declaration on this point from Count Rechberg, as I thought it not unlikely that M. de Moustier, adopting the language of M. Thouvenel, reported in Lord Cowley's despatch to your Lordship No. 18 of the 4th instant, might have suggested, or may still suggest, with dangerous plausibility, that a few weeks more or less in the departure of the French troops from Syria would not signify, and that a prolongation of their stay for that period would not require the signature of another Convention.

I have, &c.

(Signed) JULIAN FANE.

No. 341.

Mr. Lowther to Lord J. Russell.—(Received January 21.)

(No. 36.)

My Lord,

Berlin, January 19, 1861.

I, THIS morning, communicated to his Excellency Baron Schleinitz your Lordship's despatch addressed to me No. 16 of the 16th instant, relative to the question of the further occupation of Syria by the forces of a European Power, and I requested his Excellency to give it his most serious attention. In conformity with your Lordship's instructions, I read the above-named despatch to his Excellency, and when I had concluded, he said he entirely agreed with your Lordship's opinions as expressed in that despatch. There was no doubt that, according to the Convention signed in August, the troops should be withdrawn in the month of February next; but he said, which would be the greater evil—the disorder which may follow the withdrawal of the troops, or an arrangement agreed upon by the Great Powers who have assisted in restoring tranquillity, by which the stay of those troops in Syria might be prolonged? He said, if any one of the parties to the Convention, England for example, is opposed to the prolonged stay of the troops in Syria, there is no doubt the evacuation should take place at the time fixed. He added, "We are very unwilling here to take upon ourselves the recommendation of such a step as the evacuation, and, indeed, I have no very decided opinions upon the subject; I am entirely guided by the reports I received from Syria itself, as the Commissioners there are much better able to judge of the state of affairs than we are."

He said he was most anxious to know the fifteen Articles upon which he learnt the British, French, Austrian, Prussian, and Turkish Commissioners were nearly agreed; "je brûle," he said, "de les connaître;" and in reply to his question whether I was acquainted with them, I said I was not.

But, said his Excellency, if after the departure of the foreign troops there should be a repetition of the massacres which shocked and disgusted Europe last year, then the different Governments may feel themselves called upon to act in such a manner that it may serve as a "coup de grâce" to the Government of the Sultan.

I have, &c.

(Signed) WILLIAM LOWTHER.

No. 342.

M. Thouvenel to Count de Flahault.—(Communicated to Lord J. Russell by Count de Flahault, January 22.)

M. le Comte,

Paris, le 18 Janvier, 1861.

NOUS approchons du terme fixé par la Convention du 5 Septembre dernier pour la durée de l'occupation en Syrie. J'ai eu plusieurs fois à vous entretenir des intentions du Gouvernement de l'Empereur à ce sujet. Investis de la mission d'exécuter des décisions communes, nous tenons avant tout à remplir les conditions auxquelles nous avons reçu ce mandat. Toutefois, par

cette raison même, avant de quitter la Syrie, nous regardons comme un devoir de mettre les Puissances dans le cas d'examiner de concert si le départ du corps expéditionnaire à la date convenue peut s'effectuer sans danger pour la tranquillité du pays, et il nous semble opportun d'appeler sur ce point leur attention.

Les Puissances ne se sont proposé en Syrie aucun but politique, et le Gouvernement de l'Empereur s'est entièrement associé à leur pensée. Elles poursuivent une œuvre d'humanité; cette œuvre est-elle accomplie? Les Cabinets connaissent comme nous l'état des choses et savent combien la pacification a marché jusqu'ici avec lenteur. La Commission Européenne instituée à Beyrouth avait d'abord à pourvoir aux nécessités les plus urgentes en provoquant, d'un côté, des réparations, de l'autre des châtiments. Ce n'était là cependant qu'une partie de sa tâche, et non la plus importante. Elle devait encore recueillir et proposer aux Puissances les éléments du nouvel arrangement qu'il s'agit de combiner avec le Gouvernement Ottoman pour l'administration de la Montagne. Ce travail, en effet, est le complément indispensable de toutes les autres mesures déjà prises ou à prendre d'un commun accord avec la Porte. Tant qu'il n'est pas achevé, on peut dire que rien n'est fait; car dans l'état de désordre où sont toutes choses en Syrie, l'essentiel est de fixer les conditions du nouveau Gouvernement du Liban et c'est là aussi ce que les Puissances ont voulu.

Non seulement ce vœu n'est point rempli, mais la Commission arrive à peine au terme des questions de répression et d'indemnité pour ce qui concerne le Liban; d'autre part, l'entente n'est pas encore définitive pour l'indemnité à prélever à Damas, et la Porte manifeste la prétention d'évoquer à Constantinople la solution de cette question. La réorganisation administrative a été, à la vérité, abordée récemment dans des entretiens confidentiels. Mais absorbés par d'autres soins, les délégués ne se sont point jusqu'à présent trouvés en mesure de la traiter officiellement, et il serait difficile de déterminer le moment où ils pourront communiquer aux Puissances le résultat de leurs études.

Enfin, M. le Comte, l'incertitude même que ces retards laissent planer sur la réorganisation du Liban entretient les esprits dans un état d'excitation extrême; et les renseignements que nous possédons nous font craindre que le départ de nos troupes ne soit suivi de nouveaux désordres, s'il a lieu avant que les dispositions nécessaires pour garantir la sécurité des populations aient été adoptées.

Devant des considérations de cette nature, tous les Cabinets comprendront que nous attachions beaucoup de prix à dégager notre responsabilité. Si, d'une part, nous entendons demeurer fidèles aux stipulations arrêtées par la Conférence, de l'autre nous ne voulons point que l'on puisse nous reprocher de n'avoir point signalé le danger que nous croyons entrevoir. Nous sommes donc amenés à demander aux Puissances de faire connaître à cet égard leur pensée, en nous réservant simplement d'exprimer la nôtre dans les délibérations, comme signataires de la Convention du 5 Septembre, c'est-à-dire, au même titre que les autres Cabinets.

Nous avons prouvé, par l'insistance que nous avons mise à presser les travaux de la Commission, combien nous désirions pouvoir évacuer la Syrie à la date stipulée, et, encore aujourd'hui, personne ne verrait avec une satisfaction plus sincère que les circonstances nous permettent de réaliser ce désir. Si les Puissances décident qu'il y a lieu de proroger le terme de l'occupation, ayant accepté de fournir l'effectif du corps expéditionnaire nous ne refuserions point, sans doute, de continuer les sacrifices que nous nous sommes imposés pour prêter au Sultan la co-opération de nos troupes; mais, dans le cas où les Puissances seraient d'avis qu'il convient de désigner l'une ou plusieurs d'entre elles pour participer à cette mission, nous serions prêts à accepter leur concours.

Il me semble, M. le Comte, que le moyen le plus naturellement indiqué pour établir une entente sur ces divers points serait de convoquer la Conférence. Si cette manière de voir obtient l'entier assentiment du Cabinet de Londres, je vous prie de me le faire connaître le plus tôt possible et je provoquerais la réunion des Plénipotentiaires aussitôt que l'adhésion des différentes Cours me serait parvenue.

Vous voudrez bien donner lecture et laisser à Lord John Russell copie de

cette dépêche, que j'adresse également aux Représentants de l'Empereur à Berlin, St. Pétersbourg, Vienne, et Constantinople.

Agréer, &c.
(Signé) THOUVENEL.

No. 343.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received January 23.)

(No. 110. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Paris, January 21, 1861.

I WAS surprised to find, during a conversation which I had with the Austrian Ambassador yesterday, that the Austrian Commissioner in Syria had reported to his Government that the Commissioners were all agreed that the troops of occupation might be withdrawn at the period fixed by the Convention.

On questioning Prince Metternich as to the date of the Austrian Commissioner's report, I find that it was the 17th December, that is, the day on which the Commissioners held the meeting adverted to in Lord Dufferin's despatch of the 18th of that month to Sir Henry Bulwer, and M. Bédard's description of which I had the honour to lay before your Lordship in my despatch No. 65 of the 11th instant.

Prince Metternich was good enough to read to me M. Weckbecker's report. That gentleman states that a meeting having been convened at Lord Dufferin's, the French Commissioner had requested his colleagues to furnish him with their opinions as to the expediency of withdrawing the troops of occupation at the period fixed by the Convention, and that he (M. Weckbecker) being the first to speak had declared his opinion that the province might be safely left to the Turkish Authorities at the time contemplated by the Convention. This opinion is developed at considerable length and is founded on much the same reasons as those brought forward by Lord Dufferin.

M. Weckbecker adds that after a lengthened discussion the other Commissioners, whose opinion had been asked, had agreed in the conclusion at which he had himself arrived, and that M. Bédard, finding this to be the case, had expressed his own concurrence in them.

It is evident in comparing M. Weckbecker's report with those of Lord Dufferin and M. Bédard, that he must have misunderstood much of what passed on the occasion in question; but it is satisfactory to know that he himself holds, and has communicated to his Government, the opinion that the French troops can be safely withdrawn from Syria at the period fixed by the Convention of the 5th September.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

No. 344.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received January 23.)

(No. 122.)

My Lord,

Paris, January 22, 1860.

THE despatch on the affairs of Syria to which I alluded in my despatch No. 100 of the 18th instant was sent to Count Flahault last night.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

No. 345.

Lord J. Russell to Earl Cowley.

(No. 107.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, January 23, 1861.

M. THOUVENEL appears to think that, unless the European Powers are of opinion that the French troops can be withdrawn from Syria with safety to the Christians, they ought to remain.

But Her Majesty's Government cannot accept this view of the case. The French troops went to Syria in virtue of a Convention signed by the Representatives of the six Powers. On the 4th of March next, at latest, that Convention expires.

If the six Powers, including, of course, the Sublime Porte, agree to renew that Convention, the French troops will have a right to remain. Otherwise the French troops, if they should then remain in Syria, will be the invaders of the territory of His Majesty the Sultan.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 346.

Lord J. Russell to Earl Cowley.

(No. 108.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, January 24, 1861.

I HAVE had the honour to receive from the Count de Flahault a despatch addressed to him by M. Thouvenel, of which I send you a copy.*

In this despatch, of which the tone is calm and dispassionate, the Government of the Emperor recalls to mind the grounds upon which the expedition to Syria was originally undertaken; and it is affirmed, with truth, that the interests of humanity, and not any political object, were the motives of that expedition.

Various reasons are given to show that those objects are not yet accomplished, and the Emperor's Government express a desire to know the opinions of the Powers parties to the Convention of the 5th of September, before executing that part of the Convention which limits the period of occupation to six months.

With this view the French Government proposes to summon the Conference of the Representatives of the Powers at the earliest day upon which it can be assembled.

I do not wish to enter here into a discussion of the various reasons for postponing the term fixed by the Convention for the evacuation of Syria which are given in this despatch.

There is one consideration, however, which appears to Her Majesty's Government of paramount importance, upon which their decision must be founded.

The resolution to send troops to Syria was taken upon a sudden emergency, when all Europe was in a state of horror and indignation at the intelligence of the massacres perpetrated in the Lebanon and at Damascus. The object of the five Powers was to prevent a renewal of those massacres, and to show the fanatical tribes of Syria that such outrages upon humanity could not be committed without punishment and reparation.

At the same time a Commission was appointed, over which an officer of the Sultan was to preside, or has been chosen to preside, to consider and advise upon the means of pacifying Syria. This Commission was, in the first instance, to urge the Sultan's officers to punish the guilty and to afford indemnity to their victims. Its further duty, and, as M. Thouvenel says, the most important part of its task was, "to collect and propose to the Powers the elements of the new arrangement which it is proposed to make, with the concurrence of the Ottoman Government, for the administration of the Mountain."

The institution of this Commission, however, was a measure entirely separate from the Convention for sending foreign troops to Syria, and it had objects of which some were entirely separate and distinct from the despatch of troops.

* No. 342.

It appears to Her Majesty's Government that it would be a grave error in point of right and in point of policy, if the five Powers were to confound the question of foreign occupation and that of the future administration of the Mountain.

It must be recollected that Syria is a province of the Turkish Empire. The Sultan is the Sovereign of that country, and not the five Powers. The first question to ask, therefore, is whether the Sultan has need of foreign troops to maintain tranquillity in Syria. The next question is, how the Sultan proposes to provide for that tranquillity, and prevent a renewal of the massacres of last June.

If the Sultan engages to do this, and if he shows that he has means to do it, the question of the continuance of foreign occupation at once falls to the ground. If the Sultan will not undertake to secure tranquillity, or if he shall not be able to provide means to do it, further questions may arise. But those questions would be of the gravest nature, and until we know the answer of the Sultan it is not necessary to anticipate them. Suffice it to say that unless the five Powers and the Sultan agree to renew the Convention of last September, that Convention will expire, and the lawful occupation of Syria by foreign troops will terminate with it.

The consideration of the measures necessary for the permanent peace of the Mountain is a more difficult question, and, as M. Thouvenel says, it would be difficult to determine the moment when the Commissioners may be able to communicate to the Powers the result of their labours.

You will now see the conclusion to which my arguments tend. Her Majesty's Government are quite prepared, either in Conference or otherwise, to inquire of the Sultan's Ministers whether the Porte is ready to become responsible for the present tranquillity of Syria, and has provided sufficient means for that purpose.

Her Majesty's Government are not prepared to maintain European troops in Syria until means are found of totally preventing for the future those bloody encounters of hostile tribes which have been for ages the scourge of that country. They care not whether those European troops should belong to France or to any other country. Her Majesty's Government will not agree to become responsible for the future administration of a province of the Sultan by the agency of foreign troops.

You will read this despatch to M. Thouvenel, and give him a copy of it.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 347.

Lord Dufferin to Lord J. Russell.—(Received January 24.)

(No. 50.)

My Lord,

Beyrout, January 10, 1861.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Lordship's information, copies of further despatches which I have addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at the Porte.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 347.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, January 4, 1860.

I HAVE the pleasure to inform your Excellency that his Highness the Pasha of Egypt, in reply to a suggestion I ventured to make to him some two months ago, on the strength of the friendly relations which on a former occasion subsisted between us, has been good enough to place at my disposal 2,500 bushels of corn for the benefit of the distressed Christians of Syria.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 2 in No. 347.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, January 12, 1861.

I REGRET to be obliged to inform your Excellency that I have been lately hearing great complaints of the injustice and oppression to which the Druses of the Meten, a Mixed district in the Christian Kaimakamship, are being subjected by the Maronite soldiers of Jusef Keram.

It would appear that about a month ago a certain village, called Abediah, was searched for plundered property by a Turkish official. After everything supposed to be stolen had been restored to the rightful proprietors, an invitation was addressed to the Christian portion of the community to enumerate all the outstanding debts against their Druse neighbours, and Jusef Keram was recommended to quarter such a number of his armed followers in the houses of the inhabitants as would insure a speedy satisfaction of the claims. Such a proceeding naturally gave rise to every species of iniquitous exaction: false accusations were advanced, long-forgotten claims were revived, and a demand was even made for the repayment of liabilities alleged to have been contracted in the days of Mahomet Ali. The unfortunate people in vain appealed against so monstrous an imposition. The soldiery erected themselves into a tribunal, and any one who remonstrated was immediately imprisoned on the charge of complicity in the late massacres.

After everything they possessed had been squeezed out of the inhabitants, the troops moved over to another village, where they began to repeat a similar process of pillage and extortion.

Luckily I received, thanks to the vigilance of Colonel Burnaby, timely intelligence of what was going on, and having had the good fortune to gain the confidence of the Christian Kaimakam, such measures have been taken as will, I trust, prevent for the present a repetition of similar enormities; but I am anxious to acquaint your Excellency with the spirit which has been displayed, in order that you may have an idea of the kind of future in store for the Druses should they ever be handed over to the tender mercies of their Maronite fellow-subjects.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 3 in No. 347.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, January 12, 1861.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that some days ago this town was thrown into considerable agitation by the report that a soldier of Jusef Keram, the Christian Kaimakam, had been murdered by the Druses of a village in the Meten.

Nothing could be more circumstantial than the narrative which reached us. The place where the bullet entered the victim's head, the spot where it came out, the weapon wherewith the crime was committed, the motives which had induced the Druses to slaughter this particular individual, were minutely described by several eye-witnesses.

Jusef Keram, accompanied by two Turkish officers, started off at midnight to the scene of the tragedy; eighteen rounds of ammunition were served out to the French troops quartered at Beyrout; and for three days society was kept in a state of breathless expectation until news should arrive that all those engaged in the murder had been condignly punished.

It turns out, however, that the whole story was a gross fabrication, arising out of the fact that the man in question had been struck with a stone by the Druse servant of a Christian Emir, whom Jusef Keram accuses of having instigated the assault.

In reference to the above subject I have further to add that, immediately on hearing a rumour of disturbance in the Mountain, Ahmet Pasha went off in person to the spot, leaving orders with a detachment of his soldiers to follow.

This entry of Turkish troops into the Christian Kaimakamship has been considered by my colleagues and by Jusef Keram an unjustifiable infraction of the privileges of the Lebanon. Considering, however, the blame which Koor-sheed Pasha has justly incurred for hesitating to interfere with troops when a collision between Christians and Druses was to be apprehended, it is scarcely surprising that his successor should be anxious to show himself more alert on a similar occasion.

Jusef Keram wanted to resign his post, but from this resolution he has been dissuaded.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 4 in No. 347.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, January 12, 1861.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that on the 4th instant Fuad Pasha left Beyrout for Moktara, in order to preside over the trials of the Druse prisoners accused of murder by the Christian bishops and notables.

On passing through Deir-el-Kamar, his Excellency was surrounded by crowds of Christian women crying out for blood; and both here and elsewhere similar demonstrations are being organized.

Major Fraser writes me word that his Excellency is greatly embarrassed by the fact of the Christian hierarchy who furnished him with lists of the proscribed having refused to supply the evidence necessary to prove the guilt of those whom they accused. "The whole 12,000," say they, "are worthy of death, and it is not necessary we should descend to particulars."

On receiving intelligence of this circumstance, I recommended his Excellency to announce his intention of setting at large all those against whom no testimony should be forthcoming, within the space of a week; and I have also remonstrated with such of my colleagues as enjoy the confidence of the prelates against this unreasonable conduct. I am since informed that their reluctance has been overcome, and that they have condescended to enter into details. It will remain to be seen on the strength of what testimony these personages have been prepared to consign to the hands of the executioner more than a thousand of their fellow-creatures. All that I have observed leads me to believe that the lists of the accused are composed in a great measure of names designated either by chance or by motives of private animosity. In support of this conjecture, I may mention that I have been myself compelled to interfere three several times, to prevent a man known to have been resident in Beyrout while the disturbances were going on, from being carried off to prison on the charge of murder at Deir-el-Kamar, while several other gentlemen of my acquaintance, French, English, and American, have had occasion to do the like.

Major Fraser's presence on the spot, together with other precautions I have taken against either an excessive or unjust effusion of blood, will, I trust, so far succeed in countervailing the unscrupulous spirit of vengeance exhibited by the Maronite priesthood and their associates, as to enable me in a short time to announce to your Excellency that the most guilty, and none but the most guilty, have suffered for their crimes; that an amnesty has been proclaimed; and that the rest of the unfortunate Druse nation has been relieved from further pursuit and persecution.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 5 in No. 347.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, January 13, 1861.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that yesterday I had a very confidential conversation with Jusef Keram, the Christian Kaimakam.

As your Excellency is aware, this individual was originally appointed at the instance of the French Consulate. A short time previous to his nomination, I had been warned against the inexpediency of allowing any one so immediately under the influence of another nation to attain such an important post, more especially as Jusef Keram was supposed to be a tool in the hands of Bishop Tobia. When I found, however, upon inquiry, that the French candidate was a person of as much honesty and ability as any one who could be put in competition with him, I considered it would be quite contrary to the spirit of my instructions were I to allow any feelings of national jealousy to interfere with his appointment.

I therefore, not only supported his nomination, but took especial care to give him a cordial reception every time he has called upon me. The consequence has been that on each successive visit he has become more intimate in his communications, and yesterday, he at last confided to me his desire to be guided in his future conduct by my advice.

The cause of this somewhat unexpected demonstration is to be attributed to the fact that Bishop Tobia has discovered Keram to be a less subservient instrument than he had expected, and is therefore occupied in plotting his downfall. In this scheme, I believe, he is countenanced by M. de Beaufort, who was originally a little piqued at Jusef Keram being designated without previous consultation with himself, and a project is on foot to elevate to the post of Kaimakam, or, rather to that of Prince of the Lebanon, a young Shehab Emir, of the name of Mansour, who has been educated at Paris.

In reply to Keram's request for my assistance against the machinations of his enemies, I contented myself with saying, that as the consultations of the Commission might result in the establishment of a system incompatible with the maintenance of the present arrangements in the Mountain, it would be unfair in me to entertain him with false hopes, but that I would undertake that if he conducted his Government with moderation and impartiality, he should receive the support of his Excellency Fuad Pasha, and that under any circumstances, his retirement from office should never take place except under honourable circumstances.

It is by such frank and open dealing that the confidence of these people is to be won, and I trust that the friendly feelings the Christian Kaimakam has thus expressed may result in his adopting a policy of impartiality and moderation towards those whose welfare is intrusted to his charge.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 6 in No. 347.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, January 13, 1861.

SOME time since I had the honour of drawing your Excellency's attention to the cruel and indiscriminate persecution to which the whole Druse nation was in danger of being subjected by their Christian fellow-subjects, as well as to the unholy thirst for vengeance which seemed to pervade not only the uneducated classes, but the religious teachers of the Maronite sect; and in successive despatches I have substantiated my impression by narrating to your Excellency the various methods which have been adopted to procure the expulsion or extermination of the obnoxious community from the moment when the Christian rabble celebrated their hour of triumph by a series of atrocities as cold-blooded as any of which they themselves had been the victims, to the late monstrous proscription by the Christian Bishops of two-thirds of the adult Druse population.

Under such circumstances it was hardly to be expected that any thoughtful or impartial person should find a panacea for all the troubles of the Mountain in a plan which should subject this unfortunate people, whose fate under such circumstances has been so clearly foreshadowed, to the ruthless domination of their exasperated enemies. Yet, such I regret to say, seems to be the inclination, I will not say of M. Béclard, but of his Government, or, rather, of those on whom

his Government seems unwisely to depend for guidance and information concerning Syrian affairs.

Last Monday, to my great surprise, the French Commissioner took advantage of one of our confidential meetings to re-open the question as to what principles were to guide us in our re-organization of the Lebanon, by proposing that the Government of the two Kaimakams should be united in the hands of a Maronite Prince of the House of Shehab; and in support of his suggestion he enlarged in the first place, on the fact of its being our especial mission to render as complete as possible the triumph of the Christian element in the Mountain, and in the next, on the golden era which prevailed when the destinies of the Lebanon were presided over by the great Emir Beshir. The Austrian Representative followed in M. Béclard's wake, though his enthusiasm in favour of a Shehab Prince appeared to be even more factitious than that of his French colleague.

Although a little startled by the sudden proposal of a scheme so entirely at variance with the Articles which had been already accepted, and which M. Béclard himself had been good enough to propose to the Commission on our joint behalf, I contented myself with remarking, that in the first place I must deny that the advancement of a Christian, or rather Maronite ascendancy, at the expense of the vital interests of their fellow-subjects of the Lebanon, was by any means the object I had been instructed to keep in view. On the contrary, the Commission had been sent to devise the best means of putting an end to the internecine quarrels of two barbarous tribes by some arrangement which should result in the general happiness of the united population; and in support of this interpretation of our mission I begged to communicate privately to M. Béclard the statement made by M. Thouvenel to Lord Cowley, as reported in his Lordship's despatch No. 1,593 to Lord John Russell, to the effect that in his (M. Thouvenel's) opinion, "the Maronites were first excited to provoke the Druses, and then the Druses were stirred up to massacre the Maronites; that he had no desire the Maronites should be better treated than the Druses; that both races were probably equally to blame and equally to be excused; and that the question for the Powers to consider was, how these feuds were to be prevented for the future."

In the next place, I observed, any resuscitation of the Government of an Emir Beshir must prove a disastrous anachronism. The Emir Beshir had been a savage energetic despot, half Mahometan, a quarter Christian, and a quarter Druse; it is true, by dint of assassinating his enemies, putting out the eyes of his rivals, and terrorizing his subjects, he had contrived to keep the Mountain in subjection; but to imagine that because this exceptional man was a Shehab, any priest-ridden descendant of that effete family could control the fermenting elements we had now to deal with, was likely to prove a most fallacious expectation; and that in conclusion I was so convinced in my inmost conscience of the cruelty and injustice of giving up the Druse nation to the fury of a hostile tribe, to which such an arrangement as that suggested by M. Béclard would be tantamount, that I must decline even to discuss the proposition. Had there been anything wanting to make me appreciate what the Druses might expect, did they once find themselves in the power of their enemies, the late conduct of the Maronite Bishops would have been sufficient to have opened my eyes. I might have subjoined, but this remark I withhold until pushed to extremities, that the disclosures made to me by M. Béclard himself, respecting his desire to see the Druses ultimately expelled from the Mountain, as reported in one of my despatches to your Excellency, would alone become an insuperable objection to my consenting to any arrangement calculated to facilitate so iniquitous an operation. My sole desire, I added, was to arrive at an impartial arrangement. I had been the first to admit the justice of M. Béclard's objection to a continuance of a Druse domination over their Christian fellow-subjects; I had even gone so far as to entertain, subject to the approbation of my Government, his proposition to unite, under a single Christian Pasha the double Kaimakamship, provided only security was taken that such a functionary should be removed, by the circumstances of his position, from all temptation to become the partizan of fanatical religionists, or to betray the interests of his Sovereign. But to continue in the Mixed districts the tyranny of one savage tribe over the other, even though the power was to pass from the hands of Pagans into that of self-called Christians, was what I never could consent to. The Representative of Prussia then intimated his opinion that if the Lebanon were to be governed by a Christian Pasha, he would certainly have considered it advisable the office should be filled

by a person unconnected with the country, and removed from the control of sectarian influences. The discussion terminated by M. Novikow contending that the executive authority of the Lebanon ought to be indigenous, but alternating every year between representatives of the Maronite and Greek interests. This suggestion did not seem to meet with much favour at the hands of his colleagues.

On a subsequent occasion I have had an opportunity of ascertaining from M. Béclard that his language at our last meeting must be attributed to instructions he had just received from Paris, and I am inclined to think that the views conveyed in them may have been inspired, rather by the correspondence between M. de Beaufort and the Emperor's Government, than by his own with M. Thouvenel. Unfortunately the French General is inclined to listen to the counsels of Bishop Tobia; and I fear nothing very practical or beneficent is likely to issue from such a source.

I have been favoured by my Austrian colleague with even a more positive abnegation of the views his newly-arrived instructions had required him to profess at our last meeting, and as we have since received from M. Béclard an invitation to re-enter upon the discussion of the Articles, I do not think I need consider his proposition relative to the Shehab Principality as serious.

Before concluding I may mention that the Russian Commissioner, on perceiving that his Castor-and-Pollux system of alternating a Greek with a Maronite Kaimakam was not likely to meet with general approbation, has confided to me that if it was not for fear of his Government, he would be prepared to propose a Turkish Pasha for the Lebanon, as preferable to any other arrangement.

I have occasionally heard, with the same reserve, intimations to a similar effect both from my Austrian and Prussian colleagues.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

No. 348.

Lord Dufferin to Lord J. Russell.—(Received January 24.)

(No. 51.)

My Lord,

Beyrout, January 11, 1861.

IN continuation of my reply to your Lordship's inquiries respecting the population of the Lebanon, I beg to transmit a Table Mr. Vice-Consul Rogers has been good enough to draw up from materials supplied to him from the Austrian and English Consulates, together with his own remarks upon the subject.

In comparing the numerical proportions of the various communities, it is always to be remembered that the Greek Catholics are to be considered as far more nearly allied to the Maronites in their religious sympathies and national interests than to the Orthodox Greeks.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 348.

Vice-Consul Rogers to Lord Dufferin.

My Lord,

Beyrout, January 12, 1861.

I HAVE the honour to report that a few days ago, in conformity with your Lordship's instructions, I had the pleasure of an interview with M. de Week-becker, the Austrian Consul-General, who supplied me with statistics of the population of the Christian and Druse Kaimakamates, which on examination I found to coincide very nearly with the information I had received elsewhere; and that from the British Consulate-General I obtained the statistics of the Anti-Lebanon.

I have reduced all this information to a tabular form, which I have the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship.

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From the peculiarly Oriental repugnance of the natives to registration or counting of their numbers, there is a great difficulty in obtaining any correct statistics, and moreover the Government itself has not any trustworthy data upon which to form a calculation ; yet I am happy to say that Mr. C. Graham, who has had a long experience in the Lebanon, has stated his belief that this Table is as nearly correct as possible.

I have, &c.
(Signed) E. T. ROGERS.

Inclosure 2 in No. 348.

Jurisdiction.	Name of District.	Maronites.	Greek Catholics.	Orthodox Greeks.	Total of Christians.	Druses.	Muslims and Metwalli.	Jews.	Totals.	Totals of the population in souls.
Christian Kaimakamate	Meten, Mokâsîl Bekoyan, and Mokâsîl Beit Shehâb	2,500	1,000	2,600	5,500	1,300	...	...	6,900	24,000
	Salât -	1,250	150	200	1,600	202	84	...	1,962	9,830
	Kerawan, Beit Jabbâl, Beitâ Hattîn and Kâra-	12,300	300	2,500	15,100	...	620	...	15,720	72,000
	Zablah and the plain of Bekâa	130	3,100	400	3,630	130	421	...	4,161	20,000
	Totals of adult males	10,370	4,550	5,100	20,020	1,702	1,185	...	20,907	144,325
	Totals in souls	81,350	22,740	25,500	130,100	9,510	5,225	...	144,335	
Druse Kaimakamate	The Two Shâfs	250	605	75	1,010	1,700	...	...	2,710	13,550
	Jezîn	950	500	...	1,450	120	...	...	1,570	7,850
	Jabal Rihân	40	50	...	90	...	100	...	280	1,400
	Archeh	350	320	...	700	600	...	...	1,300	6,000
	The Two Jorâs	...	...	...	440	770	...	...	1,210	6,000
	The Two Ghârâs	221	200	700	1,121	1,030	27	...	2,178	10,000
	Mennâf and Shahlâ	740	300	300	1,340	705	...	...	1,945	9,725
	Aklîm Tuffah	200	600	...	800	...	40	...	840	4,200
	Aklîm Karbê	200	400	...	600	...	850	...	1,450	7,250
	Totals in adult males	3,201	3,035	975	7,451	5,005	1,107	...	13,563	67,815
	Totals in souls	16,955	15,425	4,975	37,355	25,925	5,535	...	67,815	
Malir - Governor (appointed by the Governor-General of Damascus)	Deir-el-Kamar	680	300	...	1,050	140	...	68	1,248	6,240
Ditto	Hasboya	...	...	...	1,000	1,300	...	35	3,735	18,075
Ditto	Rashya	...	...	...	1,350	2,000	195	...	3,545	17,725
Governor (Druse)	Aklîm Beitin	...	...	...	220	640	510	...	1,370	6,850
Ditto	Sidra (Baouas, &c.)	...	...	...	100	420	100	...	710	3,550
Ditto	Basilek	...	...	...	220	...	1,800	...	2,020	10,100
	Totals of adult males	600	300	...	4,540	4,500	3,495	93	12,628	63,140
	Totals in souls	3,300	1,950	...	22,700	22,500	17,475	465	63,140	
	Entire totals of adult males	20,431	8,925	6,975	36,331	11,207	5,707	93	55,608	275,400
	Entire totals in souls	102,100	40,125	30,375	100,055	50,033	28,935	465	275,400	

NORR. —To arrive at the population in souls of any district, that of adult males is to be multiplied by δ —E, T, R.

Lord Dufferin to Lord J. Russell. — (Received January 24.)

(No. 54.)

My Lord,

Beyroul, January 13, 1861.

I HAVE the honour to inclose copy of the Protocol of the sixteenth sitting of the Commission, which was holden on the 29th December, 1860.

I have, &c.

(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure in No. 349.

Protocol of the Sixteenth Meeting of the Syrian Commission, held at Beyroul, December 29, 1860.

LE vingt-neuf Décembre, mil huit cent soixante, tous les Commissaires, à l'exception de Fuad Pacha représenté par Abro Efendi, étant réunis à Beyroul sous la présidence de M. Béclard, Vice-Président, la séance est ouverte à trois heures. Le procès-verbal est lu et adopté avec quelques modifications.

Abro Efendi exprime au nom de Fuad Pacha le regret que son Excellence éprouve de n'avoir pu assister à la séance par suite de son indisposition. Il dépose ensuite entre les mains de M. le Vice-Président le dossier des pièces d'instruction relatives au procès des officiers Ottomans et des Cheiks Druses détenus à Beyroul.

Le Commissaire Français, ayant pris connaissance, ainsi que ses collègues, des jugements, ou pour mieux dire des conclusions sous forme de rapports, soumises à son Excellence Fuad Pacha par le Tribunal Extraordinaire de Beyroul, et que son Excellence a communiquées à la Commission dans la précédente séance, remarque que ces conclusions, en ce qui concerne Kourchid Pacha et les autres fonctionnaires ou officiers Ottomans, ne provoquent que l'application de la peine de la détention dans une forteresse, tandis que la peine de mort, d'après ces mêmes conclusions, est applicable à Saïd Bey Djomblat et aux autres Chefs Druses. Comme la plus grande part de responsabilité, en principe, semble devoir peser sur les autorités Ottomanes, le Commissaire Français, organe de toute la Commission, exprime le désir de savoir en quoi cette responsabilité a pu être atténuée aux yeux des juges, les pièces communiquées par son Excellence Fuad Pacha ne fournissant à cet égard aucune indication satisfaisante. Il invite donc Abro Efendi à transmettre cette interpellation au Plénipotentiaire Ottoman.

Abro Efendi répond que MM. les Commissaires trouveront sans doute dans le dossier des pièces qu'il vient de déposer, les éclaircissements qu'ils désirent. Il se fera, d'ailleurs, un devoir de transmettre à Fuad Pacha l'interpellation de M. Béclard, et il a lieu de croire que les explications de son Excellence satisferont entièrement la Commission.

M. le Commissaire de Sa Majesté Britannique appelle l'attention de ses collègues sur la nécessité qu'il y aurait, selon lui, de prendre des précautions contre l'application négligente ou inintelligente de la procédure sommaire qu'ils ont recommandée à Fuad Pacha à l'égard des principaux auteurs des massacres de Hasbeya, Racheya, et Deir-el-Kamar. MM. les Commissaires se rappelleront que, conformément à une entente arrêtée entr'eux et le Haut Commissaire Ottoman, les Chefs religieux des différentes communautés Chrétiennes furent invités à fournir à son Excellence Fuad Pacha des listes assermentées, contenant le nom des Druses que leur haute responsabilité dans les événements, ou leur participation aux massacres dans des circonstances aggravantes, rendraient passibles de la peine de mort.

En confiant aux prélats des communautés Chrétiennes la grave tâche de cette dénonciation, on était en droit d'espérer qu'un juste discernement de leur part adoucirait l'animosité vindicative qui emporte trop naturellement, d'ailleurs, leurs troupes respectifs, et ramènerait aux proportions d'une justice Chrétienne le nombre de ceux qui seraient désignés pour la peine capitale. Mais il paraît que l'on se trompait en espérant un tel résultat, vu que, sur les 8,000 adultes dont se compose la population Druse du Liban, 4,600 têtes ont été demandées par ces personnages. Il est vrai que les représentations du Haut Commissaire

Ottoman les ont déterminées plus tard à réduire le nombre de leurs sanguinaires réquisitions. Il s'élève cependant encore au chiffre énorme de 1,200 têtes. Lord Dufferin ne peut s'empêcher d'exprimer son indignation à l'égard d'une conduite dictée par un tel esprit de vengeance. Il y voit un nouvel indice du désir d'exterminer la nation Druse, désir auquel il a été déjà plusieurs fois dans le cas de faire allusion et qui est à son avis une des causes principales des derniers événements. Une circonstance que le hasard lui a fait connaître et qu'il s'empresse de révéler à ses collègues, vient d'augmenter encore le sentiment pénible que lui inspire la démarche des prélats, et sa défiance à l'égard de la justice des dénonciations fournies à son Excellence Fuad Pacha. Il paraît que pendant la nuit du 26 courant, un habitant de Deir-el-Kamar, nommé Youssef Ghalleh, accompagné d'un gendarme, se présenta à la maison d'un Cheik Druse résidant à Beyroul, nommé Sirhan, et accusant celui-ci du meurtre de son cousin à Deir-el-Kamar le jour du massacre, manifesta l'intention de l'arrêter pour le conduire à la prison. Heureusement un voisin Chrétien se porta garant de l'innocence de l'accusé, et persuada le plaignant de différer l'arrestation. Le lendemain matin cependant, Youssef Ghalleh se présenta de nouveau pour procéder lui-même à l'arrestation. Mais le Cheik Sirhan fit appel à un négociant Anglais et à plusieurs autres voisins Chrétiens, avec lesquels il était en relations journalières pendant l'été, et prouva que, le jour du crime dont on l'accusait, et pendant plusieurs semaines avant et après, il n'avait pas quitté Beyroul. Confondu par de tels témoignages, l'habitant de Deir-el-Kamar, tout en protestant contre l'intérêt que l'on témoignait à un Druse, déclara qu'il se désisterait de sa poursuite, pourvu qu'on lui donnât une certaine somme en guise de prix du sang. Il fut, d'autre part, obligé d'abandonner sa réclamation, quand il fut démontré, par la confrontation de l'accusé avec la femme du défunt, que ce prétendu coupable était innocent; néanmoins ce malheureux Cheik Druse fut obligé de récompenser les gendarmes.

Si un pareil outrage peut être impunément commis dans l'enceinte même de Beyroul et pour ainsi dire sous les yeux de Fuad Pacha, quelles violences et quelles injustices, ne doit-il pas se commettre dans les gorges de la Montagne, où aucune influence éclairée, Chrétienne ou Européenne, ne peut intervenir pour mettre un frein à la fureur vengeresse d'une population, justement indignée sans doute, mais évidemment encouragée par ses Chefs spirituels à maintenir, dans toute sa vigueur, l'ancien principe du sang pour le sang.

Ces réflexions depuis quelque temps occupent péniblement l'esprit du Commissaire Britannique, et afin de se prémunir d'avance contre l'accusation d'avoir en quoi que ce soit participé à l'effusion du sang innocent, Lord Dufferin a l'honneur de soumettre à son Excellence Fuad Pacha et à la Commission les propositions suivantes:—

1. Qu'aucun Druse ne sera traduit devant le Tribunal Militaire sans être accusé d'avoir assassiné de sang-froid un homme désarmé, une femme, ou un enfant.

2. Que le serment de deux témoins oculaires soit exigé pour servir de base à toute condamnation capitale:

3. Qu'en réglant le chiffre des condamnés à mort, on aura égard au nombre des Druses qui ont été assassinés par les Chrétiens, depuis l'arrivée de la Commission en Syrie;

4. Que le degré de la peine capitale appliquée à la nation Druse sera moindre que celui qu'on a trouvé suffisant à Damas.

Abro Efendi confirme à certains égards, par de nouveaux renseignements, les appréciations auxquelles vient de se livrer M. le Commissaire Britannique, et constate à son tour que la conduite des prélats Chrétiens ne paraît pas avoir été inspirée par ce sentiment de justice Chrétienne qui devrait la caractériser. Ils ont d'abord dénoncé 4,600 personnes. M. le Plénipotentiaire Ottoman a dû leur faire remarquer qu'il s'agissait uniquement de condamnations à mort, et que le chiffre de leurs dénonciations n'était point en rapport avec la gravité de cette peine. Ils ont alors, sur l'invitation de son Excellence, divisé leur liste en trois catégories, comprenant seulement dans la première le nom de ceux qui doivent être condamnés au dernier supplice. Cette première catégorie renferme encore, au grand étonnement du Haut Commissaire du Sultan, le nom de 1,200 individus, parmi lesquels son Excellence, après avoir communiqué les projets de sentences, se trouvera dans le cas de faire exécuter seulement les plus coupables.

En réponse aux observations de Lord Dufferin et d'Abro Efendi, concernant

les dénonciations faites par les évêques Chrétiens, le Commissaire Russe rappelle que, conformément à ce qui a été convenu entre les membres de la Commission et son Excellence Fuad Pacha, les principaux coupables devaient être signalés par les Chefs spirituels, sur l'indication des Primats Chrétiens eux-mêmes. En présentant les susdites listes, les évêques n'ont fait que remplir strictement le mandat qui leur avait été confié, et qui consistait à servir d'intermédiaires entre le Chef du pouvoir exécutif et leurs coreligionnaires. Il leur eût même été impossible de procéder aux dénonciations de leur propre chef, attendu qu'ils n'avaient pas assisté personnellement aux massacres. On ne saurait donc en aucune façon faire peser sur eux la responsabilité du chiffre plus ou moins élevé des dénonciations. Il y a même grandement lieu de penser, selon M. le Commissaire Russe, qu'ils auront réduit le chiffre primitif des dénonciations faites par leurs oncles, chiffre qui, d'après les idées reçues dans le pays en matière de droit pénal, devait sans doute comprendre autant d'accusés qu'il y avait eu de victimes.

Quant à la question des condamnations qui seront prononcées dans la Montagne, M. Novikow rappelle que la Commission a établi trois catégories de coupables passibles de la même peine. Elle a posé le principe, mais il ne lui conviendrait nullement d'entrer dans les détails de l'application. Toutefois M. le Commissaire Russe croit devoir ajouter que la seule peine décrétée étant la mort, il avait été bien entendu que cette peine ne serait appliquée qu'aux principaux criminels, et que le triage devrait être effectué avec un soin scrupuleux. La répression des Druses porte un double caractère : celui d'une peine afflictive et celui d'une mesure préventive, destinée à frapper de terreur le reste de la nation, et à lui servir de leçon pour l'avenir. Ce n'est donc pas autant dans le nombre que dans le choix des coupables et dans la recherche des circonstances, susceptibles de donner à l'œuvre de la justice plus de retentissement et d'éclat, que devra consister l'effet moral des exécutions. A cette fin, les condamnés devraient subir leur peine dans les villages mêmes qu'ils habitent, et si toutes les exécutions se faisaient simultanément, à la même heure, sur tous les points de la Montagne, un tel mode de procéder permettrait de réduire dans une certaine mesure le nombre des exécutions. Dans la pensée de M. le Commissaire Russe, l'efficacité de la répression résultera moins de l'application de peines individuelles que d'un ensemble de mesures propres à garantir le pays contre le renouvellement des mêmes calamités. Dans cet ordre d'idées, deux mesures lui semblent impérieusement réclamées par les circonstances, c'est : 1, le désarmement général de la population, qui ne s'effectuerait pas seulement en une fois, mais devrait continuer à s'effectuer sans interruption d'une manière permanente ; 2, la soumission définitive du Hauran, car il n'y aura jamais de sécurité réelle pour les populations du Liban et des contrées environnantes, tant que les auteurs de désordres seront sûrs d'y trouver une sorte d'asile inviolable.

Enfin et pour clore l'article des répressions à exercer en conséquence des événements de la Montagne, M. Novikow fait observer que les garnisons Ottomanes de Hasbeya, Racheya, et Deir-el-Kamar, qui ont livré aux Druses les Chrétiens placés sous leur protection, sont plus coupables que les Druses eux-mêmes. Jusqu'ici on n'a puni que le Commandant de ces garnisons. M. Novikow est d'avis, et il pense que tous ses collègues sans exception partagent son sentiment à cet égard, que les officiers même subalternes sont tous solidaires de la trahison commise envers les Chrétiens, et que ce ne serait pas trop que de les punir en les dégradant.

Abro Efendi répond que ces officiers, n'ayant point, à vrai dire, de responsabilité directe, puisqu'ils obéissaient aux ordres de chefs supérieurs, déjà condamnés, n'ont point paru mériter de condamnation, mais qu'il entre dans les projets du Gouvernement de les éloigner tous sans exception. En ce qui concerne la simultanéité des exécutions dans toutes les localités habitées par les Druses qui seront condamnés, le vœu émis par M. le Commissaire Russe est entièrement conforme aux propres intentions de Fuad Pacha.

M. le Commissaire d'Autriche désire que, dans l'œuvre de la répression des Druses, Fuad Pacha, tout en pratiquant une justice sévère, évite autant que possible une trop grande effusion de sang. Selon lui, les Représentants des Puissances Chrétiennes ne peuvent que recommander au Plénipotentiaire Ottoman de se montrer avare de la peine de mort.

M. le Commissaire Prussien ne peut s'empêcher de remarquer que rien dans la conduite de Fuad Pacha n'autorise à croire qu'il doive outrepasser les bornes

de la justice. Sa tendance est plutôt de rester en deçà, et quand depuis cinq mois Fuad Pacha n'a pas encore sévi contre un seul Druse, ce n'est pas la miséricorde qu'il semble précisément nécessaire de lui recommander.

M. Bécclard est d'avis que la Commission est allée aussi loin que possible dans la voie du sentiment Chrétien, quand elle a décidé que la répression des Druses s'accomplirait surtout en vue de l'avenir, et que l'on ait seulement à frapper trois catégories de coupables : les organisateurs du massacre, les chefs de bandes, et les assassins qui ont commis les plus révoltantes atrocités. Cette triple formule circonscrit dans des limites suffisamment étroites l'œuvre de justice confiée à Fuad Pacha depuis plusieurs mois, et qui vient à peine d'être commencée. Dans une telle occurrence, M. le Commissaire Français pense que la Commission pourrait tout au plus se borner à rappeler à M. le Plénipotentiaire Ottoman les termes de l'entente qui s'est établie à cet égard entre tous les membres de la Commission, et dont mention a été faite dans le procès-verbal de la séance du 14 Novembre. Depuis lors, il n'est survenu aucun incident qui puisse déterminer la Commission à se déjuger, et à proposer de nouvelles bases à la répression des Druses.

Quant au nombre des dénonciations faites par les évêques, il semble à M. le Commissaire Français plus accablant pour la nation Druse que pour les évêques. On a eu recours à leur intermédiaire, parce qu'ils sont par position plus en mesure que toutes autres personnes de recueillir et centraliser les renseignements propres à éclairer la justice. En transmettant à M. le Plénipotentiaire Ottoman les noms de ceux qui leur étaient signalés, ils n'ont fait que remplir exactement le mandat qui leur était confié, et dans cette circonstance ils n'ont agi ni comme évêques ni comme juges, mais comme citoyens. En conséquence, M. Bécclard proteste avec énergie contre l'accusation dirigée contre eux, et d'après laquelle ils ne se seraient pas montrés les dignes représentants du sentiment Chrétien. Ils ont présenté une première liste générale, contenant les noms de 4,600 Druses, et puis une seconde liste contenant seulement les noms des 1,200 principaux coupables. Ces chiffres préparatoires ne lient en aucune façon M. le Plénipotentiaire Ottoman. Il y a lieu seulement de remarquer qu'il trouvera probablement dans la seconde liste les organisateurs du complot, les chefs de bandes et les assassins sanguinaires, qui, aux termes de l'arrangement intervenu dans la séance du 14 Novembre, sont seuls passibles de la peine de mort.

M. le Commissaire Prussien appelle l'attention de la Commission sur la manière irrégulière et illusoire dont s'opère à Damas la mesure du désarmement. M. Novikow constate que, lors du voyage des Commissaires à Damas, à peine 1,500 armes avaient été recueillies. M. Bécclard fait observer que, tant que les agents de l'Autorité ne croiront pas pouvoir pénétrer dans le harem, les perquisitions dans les maisons Musulmanes ne donneront aucun résultat. M. de Rehues est d'avis que l'on devrait, sur un avertissement préalable, faire évacuer momentanément la partie des maisons Musulmanes réservée aux femmes pour y procéder aux perquisitions, et que, si cette opération rencontrait trop de difficultés, on devrait lever sur Damas un impôt forcé d'armes et de munitions. Lord Dufferin insiste sur l'utilité de la mesure du désarmement qu'il est essentiel, selon lui, d'opérer partout, à Damas et dans la Montagne. MM. les Commissaires, en terminant cette conversation, reconnaissent tous unanimement que les deux mesures du désarmement et de l'impôt extraordinaire à Damas sont de la plus haute importance. Ils expriment de nouveau à cet égard le profond regret que leur inspire la récente décision prise par la Porte, et les ajournements funestes qu'elle entraîne.

La séance est levée à quatre heures et trois-quarts.

(Suivent les signatures.)

No. 350.

Lord Dufferin to Lord J. Russell. — (Received January 24.)

(No. 55.)

My Lord,

Beyrout, January 13, 1861.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship copy of a despatch I have just received from Major Fraser, in which he details at greater length some

of the facts with which I have already acquainted your Lordship relative to his Excellency Fuad Pasha's proceedings in the Mountains.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure in No. 350.

Major Fraser to Lord Dufferin.

My Lord, Mokhtdra, January 10, 1861.

ALTHOUGH the service in connection with which I had the honour to accompany Fuad Pasha into Mount Lebanon is but commencing, I feel it necessary that your Lordship should be informed of the progress of events, the more so that obstacles, the nature of which I shall immediately explain, are being raised to his Excellency carrying out the final punishment of the Druse prisoners in the manner decided by the European Commission.

Between 700 and 800 prisoners had been collected at this centre from the various Druse districts of Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon—persons who had been denounced in lists sent in by the Chiefs of the different Christian sects, as having taken part, as actors or directors, in the recent massacres. His Excellency desiring to select for capital punishment a limited number of those who had distinguished themselves by acts of especial atrocity, caused a Mixed Commission of Civil and Military officers to be formed here, for the purpose of conducting preliminary examinations with a view to such a selection.

When this Commission called upon the Christians present to indicate those they considered most guilty, and to give their evidence in support of such accusation, the Christians, as a body, refused either to indicate or to give evidence against particular prisoners on the general plea that all were guilty and deserving of death. Successive parties of Christians who have arrived here have made the same reply.

I have now discovered an emissary in this village, who waylays witnesses coming to give evidence regarding the murder of their relatives, and induces them to withhold this, recommending them, instead, to lay it before the heads of their sect at Beyrout; otherwise, that the Government will only put a few Druses to death, thus depriving the Christians in general of the full satisfaction they desire.

I was about to arrest this person, who is a man of superior intelligence; but, on further consideration, I thought that by finding employment for him I could defeat his purpose, and at the same time use him as a means of communication with the directors of this movement. I have adopted this plan, and have tried to convince him—I hope with some success—that by the course the Christians are adopting they will utterly defeat their own object.

I have requested him to inform his principals that if no evidence is brought before the Court, which will shortly commence formal trials, the prisoners must inevitably be discharged.

Fuad Pasha is of opinion that this movement has been instigated by Chiefs of sects at Beyrout, in the probable hope, if a summary and sweeping condemnation be not made, of being thus enabled to demand the expulsion from Lebanon of all those denounced by them, amounting in the first lists to 4,500; and even in the second—the first having been rejected by Fuad Pasha as utterly unreasonable—to some 2,000 individuals, including nearly all the principal persons among the Druses.

His Excellency some days ago desired that at least two persons should be sent hither by each village from which prisoners have been taken, and who were cognizant of the alleged crimes. Should these witnesses arrive to-day, as is rather hoped than expected, the trials will commence to-morrow, the examinations having terminated last evening.

I have myself been conducting an inquiry among the Druse prisoners, and not without success, in the hope of thus obtaining information which may hereafter serve to test such other evidence as may be offered. I have had several conversations with Druses since my arrival here regarding their past culpable acts and their present position.

They state, in exculpation of their conduct, that the war was not commenced by the Druses, but by the Christians, who would have attacked them incessantly, until they were either entirely extirpated or driven out of Lebanon; and that, had the Christians succeeded in getting the Druses in their power, they would have acted precisely as the Druses have done to them—an assertion which certainly derives colour from assertions to the same effect recently made to me by the Christians themselves.

The Druses further state, in bar of heavy punishment, that their loss of life has been very severe, amounting to upwards of 1,000 killed, besides very many wounded, not only during the continuance of hostilities, but also since the arrival of French troops in the Mountain, accompanied by Christians, who have utterly pillaged their villages, and murdered, in cold blood, such inhabitants as they could lay their hands upon.

They have offered to produce detailed lists, in proof of these assertions. Should these be furnished, I shall duly transmit them for your Lordship's information.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. T. FRASER.

No. 351.

Lord Dufferin to Lord J. Russell.—(Received January 24.)

(No. 56.)

My Lord, Beyrout, January 13, 1861.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship copy of a despatch I have just received from Mr. Wrench, Acting Consul at Damascus, relative to an alleged foray of Druses from the Hauran on a village in the neighbourhood of Damascus. I am rather disposed to wait for further confirmation of the report before receiving it with implicit credit.

In the mean time I have most earnestly impressed upon Fuad Pasha the necessity of restoring such order to the country as shall render it impossible for these rumours to obtain currency. As it is, every designing person will exaggerate the occurrence to whatever degree his fears or his interest may prompt him, a fresh panic will be communicated to the Christians, and a new pretext is supplied to the French for prolonging the military occupation of the country, or even advancing into the interior. In order to prevent as far as possible the bad effects likely to result from this last incident, I have suggested to the Turkish Commissioner the expediency of placing General Kmety in temporary command of the troops stationed in the neighbourhood of the Hauran, and I have further submitted to his consideration whether it might not be possible to take into his service four or five regiments of Swiss mercenaries. Such a description of troops would be duly subservient to the Government, and at the same time would inspire the Christians with confidence. The only disadvantage attaching to their employment would arise from the necessity of their being occasionally paid.

In connection with this subject I may mention that a few days ago 260 French soldiers arrived at Beyrout from Alexandria, whither they had gone on their way to China. The officer in command hearing that peace had been proclaimed, on his own responsibility, it is said, determined to lead his detachment to the standard of General de Beaufort. This circumstance seems to have a good deal disturbed Fuad Pasha, as your Lordship will perceive by the inclosed despatch which Major Fraser has addressed to me at his Excellency's request.

It is very much to be regretted that his Excellency should have been so little successful in restoring a sense of security to the Christian population of the province. Whether it is from incompetence, or from a want of money, or from uncertainty as to what his future relations are to be with Constantinople, it is obvious the Turkish Commissioner has afforded plausible occasion of complaint to those whose interest it is to criticize the progress of his administration. Nevertheless, I am still of opinion the country is safe. With Fuad Pasha at Damascus, with General Kmety in the Mountain, and Omer Pasha, a very intelligent Circassian officer, at Aleppo, or wherever his services may be required, nothing very irregular can occur. Above all things, if the Porte would authorize

a handsome indemnity to be distributed to the sufferers of Damascus and the Lebanon, a feeling of security would return, and all excuse for the French occupation would cease. As it is the officers attached to the expedition seem to look forward to a continuance of their stay, more especially since the arrival of a letter from the Emperor, addressed through the General to the army, in which, after condoling with them on their forced inactivity, His Majesty talks of their mission to hold in awe the fanaticism which had arisen, "et qui existe encore," in Syria.

I have already written so much on the important subject of the occupation that it is not necessary I should on this occasion trouble your Lordship with any further observations.

Nothing has occurred of late to alter my former impressions, and your Lordship will be able, far better than any one here, to determine what should be done. I will merely add, in reference to any remark of M. Thouvenel's to Lord Cowley, that it is an idle pretext to allege the reparation of ruined villages as an excuse for the French army remaining in the Mountain. My previous despatches will have acquainted your Lordship in what a languid manner M. de Beaufort's soldiers have addressed themselves to this task, and such a statement only throws suspicion on the professed desire of the authorities here and at Paris to withdraw the Emperor's troops from Syria.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 351.

Acting Consul Wrench to Lord Dufferin.

My Lord,

Damascus, January 11, 1861, 1.30 P.M.

I AVAIL myself of the departure of an express from the French Consulate to inform your Lordship of an event that has just occurred, and has taken every one by surprise.

Last night, the Christians of Sahnâyeh, a village two hours to the south of Damascus, were assembled in the house of the Christian Sheikh of the village, when a Druse came in, and informed them that they had better flee, as his co-religionists, who had escaped to the Haurân, were returning to take the property they had left in the village. The Christians believing that the object of the Druses was to massacre them, fled immediately to Darâya, one hour from Damascus.

They had left the village about half-an-hour, when about 200 horsemen arrived there, composed of the Druses of the Haurân, and refugees from Ashrafiéh and Sahnâyeh, who plundered all the property of the Christians, and made off to their strongholds.

These Druses, if coming straight from the Haurân, must have passed by the bridge of Kesweh, where a strong force of troops is posted.

Neither the Vali, Mushir, nor Chief of the Police were aware of this outrage noon to-day. The Mushir when informed would not believe it, as he said the Druses could not pass the strong cordon of troops in that direction.

Your Lordship can imagine the effect this news has had, and will have when more generally known, on the minds of the Christians here, who are ready to take affright at the slightest report; proving, as it does, that the villages in the immediate neighbourhood of Damascus are not safe from attacks by the Druses, and it is to be anticipated that the Christians of the outlying villages will flee hither, and that the Christians of the city will do their utmost to escape to Beyrout.

The French Acting Consul is reporting this occurrence to his Commissioner by the present opportunity.

The presence of his Excellency Fuad Pasha would do much to diminish the fears of the Christians.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WILLIAM H. WRENCH.

Inclosure 2 in No. 351.

Major Fraser to Lord Dufferin.

My Lord,

Mokhtâra, January 10, 1861.

FUAD PASHA has handed me a document, addressed by the Chief of the French Staff to his Excellency's Secretary, announcing the arrival, at Beyrout, of a French detachment of 260 men, being a portion of the Chinese Expedition detained at Alexandria, and ordered thence to Syria.

As the Pasha appears desirous your Excellency should be informed of his views on this occurrence I do myself the honour of recording these, as expressed last evening, and of transmitting therewith a copy of Colonel Osmond's note.

His Excellency not only considers any attempt, more particularly on grounds of so unsatisfactory a character, to add to the force of the French contingent in Syria, already in excess of the numbers to which it was limited by the recent Convention, to be a direct breach of the engagement contracted on that occasion by the five Powers in alliance with the Porte, but that such an act is especially to be deprecated at a moment when the arrival of additional foreign troops is so calculated to excite a feeling among the Christian population likely to prove injurious both to the authority of the Sultan's Government and to the future tranquillity of the country.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. J. FRASER.

No. 352.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell—(Received January 26.)

(No. 136.)

My Lord,

Paris, January 25, 1861.

M. THOUVENEL has informed me that the Prussian Minister has communicated to him a despatch from the Prussian Minister for Foreign Affairs relative to the present state of things in Syria.

According to M. Thouvenel this despatch, the spontaneous effusion of the Prussian Cabinet, is a complete counterpart of his own to M. de Flahault of the 18th instant, a copy of which is inclosed in your Lordship's despatch No. 108 of yesterday's date, which I had the honour to receive this morning.

M. de Schleinitz, according to M. Thouvenel, distinctly states that he will not take upon himself the responsibility of recommending the departure of the French troops from Syria at the period fixed by the Convention of the 5th of September last.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

No. 353.

Lord J. Russell to Earl Cowley.

(Separate.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, January 27, 1861.

I HAVE to instruct your Excellency to communicate to Prince Metternich my despatch No. 108 of the 24th instant, containing the views of Her Majesty's Government on the points put forward in M. Thouvenel's note to the Count de Flahault of the 18th instant, respecting the continued military occupation of Syria.

Your Excellency will act in concert with Prince Metternich in any steps which you may take relative to the assembling of the Conference on this question, and you will invite the Turkish Ambassador to act in concert with you and the Austrian Ambassador.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

* *Baron Schleinitz to Count Pourtales.*—(Communicated to Lord J. Russell by Count Bernstorff, January 28.)

M. le Comte,

Berlin, le 16 Janvier, 1861.

J'AI eu l'honneur de recevoir le rapport par lequel vous nous rendez compte d'une conversation que vous avez eue avec M. Thouvenel sur les affaires de Syrie et notamment sur la question de savoir si les circonstances exigent une prolongation des délais stipulés dans la Convention du 5 Septembre pour la durée de l'occupation Française.

M. le Ministre des Affaires Etrangères a traité le même sujet dans une dépêche adressée le 2 de ce mois à M. le Prince de la Tour d'Auvergne, et que j'ai l'honneur de vous transmettre ci-joint en copie. Vous verrez par cette pièce, M. le Comte, que le Cabinet de Paris, en rappelant que c'est au nom des Puissances signataires de la Convention du 3 Septembre qu'il s'est chargée de l'expédition militaire en Syrie, déclare que c'est à elle aussi qu'il appartiendrait de provoquer une entente sur les modifications que la dite Convention pourrait avoir à subir.

Pour exprimer en connaissance de cause une opinion arrêtée à cet égard, il faudrait être édifié plus que nous le sommes encore sur l'état réel des choses en Syrie, et sur les conséquences probables que le départ des troupes Françaises pourrait entraîner. D'après nos renseignements la pacification du pays ne paraît cependant pas, à l'heure qu'il est, suffisamment assurée pour qu'il soit permis d'espérer qu'il pourrait dès à présent et sans danger être abandonné à lui-même.

Selon nous il serait désirable qu'avant de faire cesser l'occupation Française, la nouvelle organisation politique du pays fût achevée et eût pour le moins un commencement d'exécution. J'ignore si jusqu'au terme assigné par la Convention du 5 Septembre à l'occupation Française un tel résultat pourra être obtenu. D'un côté, le Cabinet du Roi, pour sa part, ne saurait donc vouloir ni assumer ni partager la responsabilité des dangers dont le départ prématuré des troupes Françaises pourrait menacer l'ordre et la tranquillité de la Syrie.

Mais, de l'autre, il est d'avis que la présence de ces troupes en Syrie, puisqu'elle se fonde sur un arrangement survenu entre les grandes Puissances et la Sublime Porte, ne saurait être prolongée au delà du terme fixé par cet arrangement qu'en vertu d'un acte auquel tous les Gouvernements signataires de la Convention du 5 Septembre auraient donné leur adhésion.

Veillez, &c.

(Signé) SCHLEINITZ.

No. 355.

Mr. Fane to Lord J. Russell.—(Received January 28.)

(No. 63.)

My Lord,

Vienna, January 24, 1861.

IN obedience to your Lordship's instructions I have read to Count Rechberg your Lordship's despatch addressed to me No. 14 of the 16th instant. His Excellency interrupted my reading of that despatch several times, in order to express his concurrence in the views it embodied, and his appreciation of the cogent reasoning by which they were supported. There was not a single phrase which called forth any expression of dissent on the part of Count Rechberg.

When I had concluded my reading of the despatch, his Excellency requested me to convey to your Lordship the expression of his best thanks for the communication I had been instructed to make to him, and to add that he shared the views exposed in it, and was desirous to act in complete accord with Her Majesty's Government on the question of the occupation of Syria by foreign troops.

I learn from the Turkish Ambassador that Count Rechberg informed him of the substance of your Lordship's despatch, and of his entire concurrence with the views of Her Majesty's Government on the subject of which it treats.

Prince Callimachi has stated to me that he had received communications direct from Fuad Pasha, in which he asserted that the prolonged presence of French troops in Syria was calculated to aggravate, instead of to appease, the animosity of the hostile tribes, and that the means at his command were amply sufficient to enable him to maintain the peace of the province without any foreign aid.

I have, &c.

(Signed) JULIAN FANE.

No. 356.

Mr. Louther to Lord J. Russell.—(Received January 28.)

(No. 47.)

My Lord,

Berlin, January 26, 1861.

IN conversation this morning with Baron Schleinitz, I informed him it was your Lordship's opinion that if the stay of the European troops in Syria was not considered necessary by the Ottoman Government, it was the duty of the Sultan's Minister for Foreign Affairs to address the Five Powers to express the opinion of Turkey as to the safety of the Christians in Syria, or to specify the guarantees he would offer to secure them against a renewal of massacre. His Excellency entirely agreed with your Lordship's opinion; but I understood him to say the French Government was about to address a communication on the subject to the Great Powers.

The Turkish Minister, a few days since, informed Baron Schleinitz of the desire of his Government for the speedy removal of the troops from Syria. Baron Schleinitz expressed the opinion of the Prussian Government as not opposed to the evacuation.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. LOWTHER.

No. 357.

Sir H. Bulwer to Lord J. Russell.—(Received January 29.)

(No. 50.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, January 18, 1861.

AS I knew the great repugnance the Porte would feel to name a Governor of Syria for ten years, and that any arguments I could individually use in favour of this course would be unavailing, I thought it better to give your Lordship's views every weight by informing Aali Pasha frankly of what you had written to me on the subject, and I ought not to disguise from your Lordship that the language His Highness used on this occasion was very decided. In fact, he said, such an arrangement was a severance of Syria from the Empire, and that the Porte would only consent to it as a consequence of force, which it would resist to the best of its ability.

As Lord Dufferin's later proposition has diminished the term to five years, and I do not know what weight this may have with your Lordship, I thought it better not to compromise the subject further by discussion here for the moment, and to leave it to your Lordship to state to M. Musurus what, on hearing the Porte's objections, may be your final opinion. I felt it, however, at the same time, my duty to state clearly the view which Her Majesty's Government had taken as to the system of bribery and corruption existing at Constantinople, and the manner in which Pashalics were granted; and I should judge from Aali Pasha's language that he will give your Lordship his firm denial as to the accuracy of the statements which your Lordship has received, at least as far as the present time is concerned, on this subject; and profess his willingness, on any case of bribery being proved, to advise the Sultan to inflict the most summary punishment on the delinquents. I am myself obliged in justice to say that I believe a great deal of exaggeration has existed on this matter, and that the stories circulated at Pera and elsewhere are not to be implicitly believed. I do not, however, mean to deny that very improper appointments are not very frequently made. I too frequently complain of appointments, not to have my

opinion recorded in an opposite sense; but I am inclined to think when the choice of a Pasha unfitted for his situation is made, that this is generally to be attributed to influence of other kinds, and not to be considered as the effect of money given or taken by the higher officials. I think, notwithstanding, that it would be advisable that the person charged with reorganizing Syria should have very extensive power, and that the duration of his office, unless some serious cause for displeasure or dissatisfaction arose, should be fixed.

There is also an article in Lord Dufferin's recent propositions, that of placing the Christian subjects of the Porte in Syria under foreign protection, to which the Porte would undoubtedly have grave objections; nor am I aware how your Lordship would view this measure, since its consequences would be very extensive, and would be opposed to the general policy which Her Majesty's Government has hitherto pursued in the East.

Upon the whole the most practical course seems to me that the Porte should state its own intentions, which will then have to be discussed by the Great Powers and the Commissioners, and I should trust that on many essential points all parties may agree.

With respect to what your Lordship observes as to the absolute necessity of the Porte providing adequately for the tranquillity of Syria, I have not disguised from the Ottoman Government that any failure on its part in this respect would be equivalent to the loss of all further support from Her Majesty's Government. As to the means now at its disposal for providing adequately for such tranquillity, I do not like, not being on the spot, to hazard any opinion of my own on such a subject, but I have very great faith in Lord Dufferin's judgment, and would be inclined to take his opinion as conclusive.

At the same time I think if the Porte were to increase the number of foreign regiments it has in its service, and maintain a certain force of this description in Syria, such a measure might furnish an additional guarantee to those other measures which it is already prepared to take, and to which I alluded in my recent communication. Nor do I at present think it would be very difficult to get the Porte to give this security, if Her Majesty's Commissioner deemed it advisable, and Her Majesty's Government authorised me to recommend it.

In short, my general notion is that Aali Pasha and the Grand Vizier would be induced to adopt any reforms in Syria that did not tend to separate that province from the Empire at large, and which might be adopted as general improvements in the other parts of the Sultan's dominions, but I think they will very strenuously and obstinately oppose the establishment of any condition of things in Syria that would be likely to lead to this Province assimilating itself to the peculiar situation of Egypt and the Danubian Provinces.

It seems to me better to state this to your Lordship at once, and without reserve, but at the same time I shall not fail to urge upon this Government, with all the ability in my power, whatever views your Lordship, who is so much better able to form an opinion, may ultimately form, and instruct me to enforce.

I have, &c.

(Signed) HENRY L. BULWER.

No. 358.

Memorandum communicated by M. Musurus, January 29, 1861.

IL résulte d'une dépêche télégraphique adressée par son Altesse Aali Pacha à l'Ambassadeur de Turquie à Londres en date du 28 Janvier, 1861, que le Cabinet des Tuileries a proposé à la Sublime Porte de convoquer la Conférence à l'effet de décider la question de savoir si l'évacuation de la Syrie doit être effectuée à l'expiration du terme fixé par la Convention, ou s'il y a lieu de la prolonger. "Vous n'ignorez pas," ajoute Aali Pacha, "que ce que la Sublime Porte désire, c'est de voir l'occupation étrangère cesser à l'expiration du terme fixé, et que le Gouvernement Impérial se croit en état de maintenir tout seul la tranquillité de la Syrie et la sécurité de ses habitants." Enfin, son Altesse Aali Pacha invite l'Ambassadeur à demander à Lord John Russell, et à faire connaître immédiatement et par le télégraphe au Ministère Impérial, quelle est l'opinion du Cabinet Britannique sur la réunion de la Conférence, et, si cette

Conférence était convoquée, jusqu'à quel point la Sublime Porte pourrait compter sur un résultat conforme à son désir de faire cesser l'état de choses actuel en Syrie.

No. 359.

Memorandum by Lord J. Russell.

I HAVE informed M. Musurus that Her Majesty's Government cannot give any advice to the Porte respecting the reassembling of the Conference. That Her Majesty's Government will direct the Ambassador of Her Majesty to attend such Conference only in case of the presence of a Representative of the Sultan at the Conference. That it is the opinion of Her Majesty's Government that in case the Porte does not wish to renew the Convention she should declare to the Allied Powers that the Sultan has means to prevent a renewal of massacre, and that until other conditions are agreed to the arrangement of 1845 for the government of the Mountain will remain in force.

(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

January 29, 1861.

No. 360.

Lord J. Russell to Earl Cowley.

(No. 120. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, January 29, 1861.

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 136 of the 25th instant, reporting that M. Thouvenel had informed you that the Prussian Minister had communicated to him a despatch from his Government on the question of prolonging the military occupation of Syria, which despatch, M. Thouvenel states, is a complete counterpart of his Excellency's note to Count Flahault, a copy of which was inclosed in my despatch No. 108 of the 24th instant.

On this subject I have to state to your Excellency that Count Bernstorff has communicated to me confidentially a copy of this despatch, and I now transmit it confidentially to your Excellency.

Count Bernstorff said the Prussian Government could not undertake the responsibility of advising that the French troops should evacuate Syria, but that if any Power objected to the renewal of the Convention the French occupation would cease as a matter of course.

I am, &c.

(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 361.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received January 29.)

(No. 152.)

My Lord,

Paris, January 28, 1861.

VARIOUS circumstances have prevented my communicating to M. Thouvenel before to-day your Lordship's despatch No. 108 of the 24th instant, which contains the answer of Her Majesty's Government to his Excellency's despatch to Count Flahault of the 18th instant relative to the evacuation of Syria.

M. Thouvenel said that he must have the despatch translated before he spoke to me officially upon it, but he noticed at once with expressions of satisfaction the moderate and friendly tone which pervades it. He admitted the correctness of your Lordship's statement that "the institution of the Commission sent to Syria was a measure entirely separate from the Convention for sending foreign troops there, and that it had objects of which some were entirely separate and distinct from the despatch of troops;" but still he said there was so much connection between the institution of a regular Government and the establishment of order and peace, for which latter object, according to the terms of the Convention, the

• No. 354.

troops had been sent, that he could not entirely separate the one from the other. He could state most solemnly that those who supposed that there was any desire on the part of the Emperor or of his Government to prolong indefinitely the occupation of Syria were entirely mistaken. "Our feeling," he said, "is simply this: that we shall bring our troops away, leaving the people we went to protect in a worse position than before the late occurrences. The Mountain then had an administration of its own founded on an arrangement between the Five Powers and the Porte. At the present moment there is no Government at all, except the supreme power of the Porte. All that we desire is, that before we go a Government may be installed, which shall not place the Maronites in a worse position than they were. We shall then have done all that under the circumstances it was possible to do, and we can defend ourselves before the Catholic world, should fresh atrocities ensue; but if, in consequence of the departure of our troops, there is a renewal of the massacres the whole blame will fall on us. There is not a post that arrives from Syria that does not bring petition upon petition to the Emperor for continued protection, and it is difficult to abandon altogether these people who have at all times looked to us, for I will not deny that we place a certain value in the preservation of our influence over the Maronites."

I replied that it was a question whether the presence of French troops was not rather a hindrance than a help to any settlement. On the one hand, the Maronites, reckoning on French protection, put forth the most extravagant pretensions; on the other, the Druses were naturally much irritated, and unwilling to come to terms. M. Thouvenel answered that he felt the justice of this remark, but he could assure me he had no desire to support the exaggerated hopes of the Maronites. Let the Commission agree with Fuad Pasha upon a system of government, he cared not what it might be, provided the privileges assured in 1845 were maintained, and he should be perfectly satisfied. But until this should be accomplished he still trusted that the evacuation might not be insisted upon. If the Commission would really set to work, a very short time ought to bring this affair to a conclusion. He did not see why a Government should not be installed before, or at all events very soon after, the commencement of March, particularly if orders were sent to the Commissioners to hasten their work, or if the Porte felt that the withdrawal of the troops depended upon its accomplishment. Let the labours of the Commission be limited to the future administration of the Mountain alone, and there need not be any great delay in bringing that to a practical conclusion.

But, I objected, the Porte may insist on the evacuation of Syria at the period stipulated by the Convention. What then?

"Why then," replied M. Thouvenel, "the troops must go; of that there can be no doubt. Without the Porte's assent they cannot remain. At all events," he concluded, "let us discuss this question calmly when the Conference meets. If it is decided against our wishes, we shall regret it, but we shall respect the decision."

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

No. 362.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received January 29.)

(No. 156. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Paris, January 28, 1861.

I HAD the honour to receive late on Saturday night a few autograph lines from the Emperor, inclosing a despatch from General Beaufort to the Minister of War, dated Beyrout, the 12th instant, in which General Beaufort calls at great length the attention of his Government to the present state of Syria, and concludes that it would not be advisable to withdraw at the present moment the army which he commands.

The Emperor, in his letter to me, expresses the wish that I should endeavour to prevail on Her Majesty's Government to regard this matter in an equitable light, to adopt an organization which will prevent a renewal of the massacre of the Christians, and he will then, he says, be very glad to withdraw his troops.

I had a copy taken immediately of General Beaufort's despatch, which your Lordship will find inclosed.

But I had further to determine what course I should take myself. The direct appeal made to me was in every way most disagreeable, and yet matters in regard to the Syrian question have arrived at that critical state that I did not deem it expedient to refuse altogether to be a channel of communication between His Majesty and your Lordship.

On reading through General Beaufort's despatch I found so many palpable exaggerations of real facts, and so many assertions at variance with the reports received by Her Majesty's Government, that I abandoned the first idea I had of answering the Emperor's communication in writing, but I have requested His Majesty to grant me an audience, when I can discuss the whole matter with him.

Besides endeavouring to show the Emperor that the reports of General Beaufort are not implicitly to be relied upon, I shall, upon the general question, make use of those arguments with which your Lordship has furnished me in your despatch No. 108 of the 24th instant.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

Inclosure in No. 362.

General Beaufort to the Minister of War.

M. le Maréchal,

Beyrout, le 12 Janvier, 1861.

LE rapport que j'ai eu l'honneur de vous adresser le 4 Novembre dernier résumait les résultats obtenus par les opérations du corps expéditionnaire dans la Montagne, les mesures prises pour hâter la réinstallation des Chrétiens avant l'hiver partout où notre action directe pouvait s'étendre, et les difficultés de tous les instants suscitées par les agents Ottomans pour empêcher le bien que nous cherchions à faire. Il exposait ensuite la misère des populations Chrétiennes pour le présent, leurs préoccupations pour l'avenir, la nécessité d'y mettre un terme, et enfin les moyens qui me paraissaient pouvoir être employés pour arriver au but que l'Europe se propose.

Depuis lors mes dépêches successives vous ont tenu au courant des faits et des incidents qui se sont produits. Je crois néanmoins nécessaire au moment où l'on paraît se préoccuper de la solution de la question de Syrie, de mettre de nouveau sous vos yeux le tableau exact d'une situation que ne ferait que s'aggraver si on ne la dégagait promptement d'une incertitude qui démoralise les Chrétiens et encourage les mauvaises dispositions de leurs ennemis. Dans le Liban rien n'a été fait en dehors de ce que nous avons pu faire directement, malgré les efforts des Turcs pour paralyser notre action. A l'heure qu'il est le Gouvernement Ottoman, qui devait punir les coupables et secourir les victimes, ne peut encore prouver par aucun fait sérieux sa sincérité, lorsque cherchant à écarter l'intervention de l'Europe et le concours de la France il promettait justice et réparation. Pour le châtement, aucun des Chefs Druses arrêtés le 21 Septembre n'a encore été condamné, lorsque leur culpabilité ressort évidente pour tous de leur conduite pendant les massacres, et nul ne peut prévoir, bien que leur procès dure depuis trois mois, le sort réservé à Khoorchid Pacha, à Tahir Pacha, et aux autres agents Turcs si gravement compromis, si formellement accusés.

Mis en demeure de sévir contre les Druses de la Montagne, Fuad Pacha s'est fait fournir par les délégués des Chrétiens les listes des plus coupables et a mis un mois à les discuter. Les plus compromis ont pu fuir avant les arrestations dont j'ai rendu compte, et depuis, les plus importants parmi ceux qui se sont laissés prendre ont été mis en liberté, sous le prétexte qu'ils ne figuraient point sur les listes d'accusation. A Aber, sur 33 individus arrêtés, un seul se trouve aujourd'hui en prison; tous les membres de la famille Abou Nakad, spécialement signalée pour le part qu'ils ont pris aux massacres, ont été élargis après une première enquête faite par le Cadi envoyé de Beyrout. Dans le Meten, sur 472 Druses portés sur la liste, 49 ont pu être saisis, 4 seulement sont conservés pour être jugés. Il ne reste enfin, dans la prison de Mokhtarah que des gens sans importance, parmi lesquels, lorsqu'il y sera contraint, Fuad Pacha choisira les victimes qu'il donnera comme satisfaction à l'opinion publique.

Toutes ces dispositions prises, le Commissaire Extraordinaire du Sultan est parti le 5 pour Mokhtarrah, afin d'aller surveiller lui-même cette répression annoncée avec éclat. Les Chrétiens ne s'y sont pas trompés; leurs délégués ont refusé de suivre le Pacha, qui voulait faire d'eux des accusateurs publics, rejeter sur eux aux yeux des populations la responsabilité des condamnations, et déclarer ensuite après un jugement sommaire, prononcé en dehors de tout contrôle et en présence de ces délégués seuls, qu'il avait satisfait à toutes leurs demandes et que dès lors la répression était complète, le sang effacé. Je suis encore sans détail sur ce qui s'est passé à Mokhtarrah depuis son arrivée, mais je sais déjà que, de toutes parts, les Chrétiens déclarent qu'ils ne veulent accuser que les gens qu'ils signalent eux-mêmes à la justice, et qu'ils ne le feront que si le jugement a lieu à Beyrouth publiquement et avec les garanties de justice que peut seule lui donner la présence des délégués des Commissaires Européens.

Pour la restitution aux Chrétiens des objets enlevés par les Druses elle n'a réellement produit de résultat sérieux que là où les détachements Français l'ont exigé directement malgré l'opposition des agents Ottomans. Partout ailleurs, les Turcs se sont contentés de faire rendre quelques mauvaises couvertures, des ustensiles de ménage de peu de valeur qu'ils conservent en magasin, sous le prétexte d'apporter de la régularité dans la distribution aux Chrétiens, ou qu'ils ne donnent que sur des reçus constatant qu'ils forment un à-compte largement évalué, sur l'indemnité définitive à payer plus tard à ces derniers.

Pour la réinstallation des habitants dans leurs villages ruinés, pour la reconstruction de leurs maisons détruites par l'incendie, partout où nos soldats ne sont point pour aider aux travaux, partout où l'argent de l'Europe ne fournit pas les matériaux indispensables, rien ne se fait. Quelques secours insignifiants pouvant à peine suffire aux besoins du moment, parfois la quatrième ou la cinquième partie d'une indemnité calculée d'après une évaluation dérisoire des pertes à réparer—telles sont les seules mesures prises depuis cinq mois par l'autorité Ottomane, et dont elle fait grand bruit. C'est avec une peine infinie que j'ai pu obtenir la promesse de 750,000 piastres pour rebâtir Deir-el-Kamar, une ville de 5,000 habitants, complètement détruite, et encore sur cette somme 300,000 piastres seulement ont été payés.

Quant aux localités qui sont en dehors de l'action du corps expéditionnaire ou dont la Commission n'a pu s'occuper spécialement, rien n'a été fait pour elles. Dans tout le district de Djézrin, les habitants sont sans aucune ressource pour vivre ou relever leurs maisons; ils n'ont reçu depuis leur entrée dans leurs villages qu'une couverture pour trois ou quatre personnes, et une distribution de farine qui les a fait vivre pendant quelques jours. Aussi viennent-ils de réclamer en masse à Fuad Pacha qu'ils sont allés trouver à Mokhtarrah, et d'adresser à la Commission, ainsi qu'à moi, une supplique dans laquelle ils déclarent que s'ils ne sont point secourus promptement, ils vont être de nouveau obligés d'émigrer dans les villes déjà si encombrées du littoral.

Pour toutes ces populations complètement dénuées de ressource non seulement le présent n'est point assuré, mais l'avenir est précaire. Elles ne peuvent cultiver, manquant de bêtes de labour et de semence. Leur principale industrie, celle qui pourrait les faire vivre l'an prochain, est la soie; elles n'ont ni la graine qui donne les vers ni les abris pour les élever, lorsque depuis deux mois Fuad Pacha promet de la graine et de l'argent pour les abriter. Ainsi que je le prévoyais dès mes premiers rapports, les rigueurs de l'hiver et la misère ont déjà fait plus de victimes que les massacres. Il est des villages décimés par les fièvres, d'autres dans lesquels tous les enfants en bas âge sont mort d'épuisement et de froid.

La tranquillité matérielle existe, il est vrai, sous la crainte que nous exerçons; mais est-ce bien le calme pour les Chrétiens lorsque partout où nous ne sommes pas pour les protéger, ils sont constamment menacés et insultés par les Druses ou les Musulmans, lorsqu'ils ne peuvent obtenir justice des Turcs qui protègent ouvertement leurs ennemis, lorsqu'ils ne peuvent sans s'exposer vaquer à leurs occupations, lorsqu'enfin sous le prétexte d'une mesure générale ils sont les seuls auxquels on interdise de porter des armes.

Pour remédier à cette misère horrible et atténuer tout au moins ses conséquences j'avais amené Fuad Pacha à imposer aux Druses, en dehors de l'indemnité qu'ils auront à payer plus tard, une légère contribution en argent ou en nature qui devait suffire pour faire vivre les Chrétiens durant la mauvaise saison. Les ordres étaient donnés et n'avaient soulevé aucune complication,

les dispositions étaient prises pour en assurer partout l'exécution qui ne pouvait rencontrer de difficulté que dans les détails insignifiants, lorsque Fuad Pacha, profitant d'une objection faite en faveur des Druses par un des membres de la Commission, suspendit la mesure.

Discutée de nouveau, modifiée et approuvée définitivement depuis plus de quinze jours, elle reste aujourd'hui à l'état de lettre-morte, sans qu'il soit question de la remettre en vigueur, lorsque chaque jour de retard aggrave une misère à laquelle elle eût depuis longtemps remédié.

Telle est la situation du Liban; celle des autres parties du pays offre partout un tableau presque aussi triste.

A Beyrouth, à Saïda, dans toutes les villes du littoral, l'encombrement des réfugiés est toujours le même, et les ressources diminuent en même temps que les besoins augmentent. Toute cette population ne vit que de charité et d'aumônes.

Dans la Béguin, les secours ne parviennent que dans les villages placés dans le rayon d'action du Comité Français, constitué à Zahlé, pour distribuer l'argent des souscriptions.

Aucune mesure sérieuse n'a été prise pour ceux de l'Anti-Liban, des districts de Hasbeya et de Rascheya, restés sous l'action directe des Turcs. Partout, de ces côtes, la situation est la même qu'il y a six mois: les maisons détruites ne se relèvent pas, la population mourant de faim est en grande partie réfugiée sur le littoral.

Les Chrétiens des environs de Baalbeck commencent, comme ceux de Zahlé, à se réinstaller. Malgré la présence d'une garnison Turque assez considérable sur ce point, des désordres viennent, dit-on, d'avoir lieu, et, menacés par les Musulmans et les Metuali, ces Chrétiens auraient été obligés de quitter leur pays. J'attends des détails sur ce fait qui vient de m'être signalé.

Dans les districts de Saïfa et Dikkar, situés au nord-est de Tripoli, les désordres continuent, les Chrétiens sont chaque jour victimes de nouvelles vexations. Les exactions des Chefs ont amené leur ruine presque complète, sans que l'autorité de Tripoli paraisse se préoccuper de remédier à cette situation.

A Alep, quelques troubles viennent d'avoir lieu et ont nécessité l'envoi de deux bataillons de Tirailleurs, pris dans la garnison de Damas.

Tout le pays aux environs de Homs et de Hama, entre Damas et Alep, est ravagé par les Arabes. Les nouvelles qui me parviennent de ces localités sont assez inquiétantes.

A Damas, la situation est peut-être encore plus mauvaise que celle que j'exposais dans mon Rapport du 4 Novembre. L'effet des premières mesures de rigueur de Fuad Pacha diminue tous les jours; les Musulmans sans se livrer à des actes de violence conservent une attitude hostile et menaçante; les Chrétiens, dont rien n'assure l'avenir, perdent la confiance que l'intervention Européenne leur avait un instant rendue; le désarmement des Algériens d'Abd-el-Kader, que l'autorité Ottomane persiste à exiger, augmente leurs inquiétudes; l'émigration continue et tous auraient déjà quitté la ville si des mesures n'avaient été prises pour les en empêcher. La présence de la Commission a pu encore ranimer leur confiance pendant quelques jours, le découragement n'a été que plus grand ensuite, lorsqu'aussitôt après son départ les travaux, commencés la veille de son arrivée dans le quartier détruit, ont complètement cessé; lorsqu'au lieu du soulagement qu'ils avaient espéré, ils sont retombés dans leur misère de la veille.

Dans le Hauran la position des Chrétiens est toujours aussi précaire; ils vivent sous la menace incessante des Arabes et des Druses qui s'y sont réfugiés.

Voulant connaître exactement la situation des Chrétiens du sud de la Syrie, et apprécier la valeur des renseignements qui me parviennent des localités placées en dehors de l'action du corps expéditionnaire, j'ai cru devoir faire parcourir le pays par quelques officiers de mon Etat-Major, sous le prétexte d'un voyage à Jérusalem, pour enlever à cette excursion tout caractère d'investigation.

Ces officiers m'ont quitté le 12 Décembre à Saïda, et ont longé la côte en visitant Sour (Tyr), St Jean d'Acre, et Kaïfa. De là ils ont traversé la Galilée et la Samarie par Nazareth, le Thabor, Djennin et Naplous, pour gagner ensuite Jérusalem; et ils sont revenues par Ramleh s'embarquer à Jaffa, sur un des courriers de la côte qui les a ramenés le 30 Décembre à Beyrouth.

Le résumé des observations faites pendant ce voyage complétera le tableau de la situation générale de la Syrie.

Saida, ainsi que je l'ai jugé moi-même, était dans une situation telle que j'ai dû y envoyer une compagnie d'Infanterie; l'Agent Consulaire de France, et un de nos religieux, avaient été grossièrement insultés par des soldats Turcs; les Musulmans excités menaçaient les Chrétiens; l'autorité de l'aveu du Mudir était impuissante pour calmer l'agitation, et n'aurait pu empêcher le désordre s'il s'était produit. La présence de nos troupes a bien vite calmé l'effervescence, et rendu la confiance aux Chrétiens de la ville et à plus de 3,000 réfugiés des districts de Djezzine, de Hasbeya, et de Rascheyra.

Sour, l'ancienne Tyr, n'est plus aujourd'hui qu'une misérable bourgade de 4,000 habitants, dont 1,800 à 2,000 Chrétiens, le reste Musulmans et Metualis. Il s'y trouve, en outre, 2,300 réfugiés de Rascheyra, Fokhara, de Mimes et d'El Kefir; ces malheureux installés dans des magasins en ruines, presque nus, n'ont pour vivre que les trente paras que le Gouvernement paie fort irrégulièrement à chacun d'eux. Malgré leur misère horrible, ils ne veulent point retourner dans leur pays, où ils ne trouveraient, disent-ils, que les ruines de leurs maisons, les cadavres de leurs parents, et les menaces des meurtriers impunis.

Tyr n'a pas de garnison régulière; le Gouverneur ne dispose pour maintenir l'ordre et la tranquillité que d'une vingtaine d'agents de police, et de quelques Bachi-Bouzouks.

Le pays aux environs et jusqu'à Acre est assez tranquille; les Metuali, qui forment la majorité de la population, n'inquiètent plus les Chrétiens, bien qu'ils aient aidé au pillage pendant les derniers événements, et tout porte à croire qu'ils se détacheraient facilement des Turcs qu'ils détestent, s'ils ne se croyaient pas condamnés à leur obéir.

St Jean d'Acre compte encore une population sédentaire de 11,000 à 12,000 âmes, dont 9,000 Musulmans, 2,000 Chrétiens, et 300 ou 400 Israélites. Des fortifications restaurées et augmentées par Ibrahim Pacha, malgré de nombreuses dégradations que l'on ne s'est jamais préoccupé de réparer, sont cependant, du côté de la mer principalement, en assez bon état. L'armement est de 180 canons de tous les calibres, de toutes les origines, et de 18 mortiers, presque tous hors de service et montés sur des affûts vermoulus. Le Gouvernement vient toutefois d'envoyer à Acre, comme il l'a fait à Tripoli, quelques pièces nouvelles pour armer les défenses du côté de la mer. La garnison est de 300 soldats de Nizam, et de 350 canonnières pris parmi les Musulmans de la ville. Le Pachalic n'a guère qu'une population de 60,000 habitants, parmi lesquels 20,000 Chrétiens.

L'esprit des Musulmans d'Acre a de tout temps été très mauvais; aussi les Chrétiens ont-ils eu de sérieuses inquiétudes pendant les derniers événements. Le moindre incident pouvait être le signal des massacres, et s'ils n'ont point eu lieu, on le doit exclusivement au dévouement du Mufti. Malgré cette justice que les Européens et les Chrétiens de la ville lui rendent unanimement et publiquement, ce Musulman Abdallah Aboul Nada a seul été arrêté à la suite d'une enquête faite par l'Amiral Mustapha Pacha sur ce qui s'était passé à Acre, emmené à Beyrouth et exilé à Rhodes par Fuad Pacha, comme accusé d'avoir poussé ses co-religionnaires au désordre.

Aujourd'hui encore, les Musulmans, excités par les soldats Turcs, et principalement par les canonnières connus pour leur fanatisme, ne cessent de menacer et d'insulter les Chrétiens, leur annonçant hautement que les massacres recommenceront le jour très prochain où les Français quitteront le pays.

A Kaïfa, les inquiétudes sont moins vives, parcequ'il se trouve toujours sur la rade quelques bâtiments Européens qui donnent de la confiance aux Chrétiens du reste peu nombreux dans cette ville.

A Nazareth et dans toute la Galilée, le calme est rétabli depuis le débarquement des troupes Françaises, mais les inquiétudes ont été vives pendant les événements du Liban et de Damas; et si les Chrétiens ont été respectés, tous déclarent hautement que, n'ayant aucune confiance dans les Agents Turcs dont le mauvais vouloir leur était connu et dont l'impuissance est manifeste, ils ne le doivent qu'à l'énergie d'un Chef de Bédouins, Aquilé Agha, qui, par haine des Turcs, s'est fait ouvertement leur défenseur et a maintenu les Musulmans prêts à les attaques. La belle conduite de ce Chef est comparée dans tout le pays à celle d'Abd-el-Kader à Damas; comme l'Emir il aime la France et lui paraît dévoué, c'est un homme à encourager, car si un désordre se produisait dans

la Galilée, ce serait encore aujourd'hui le seul secours sur lequel les Chrétiens pourraient compter.

Il y a également à Nazareth un Musulman influent dont la conduite pendant les derniers troubles mérite les plus grands éloges; c'est le Né. Mahmed Saphidi, qui a été décoré par l'Empereur auquel il fut présenté à Paris par M. de Sauley qu'il avait sauvé des mains des Bédouins, dans une excursion scientifique à Tibériade.

A Naplous et dans la Samarie, le pays si agité et presque insoumis aux Turcs il y a quelques années à peine, est maintenant tranquille sous l'administration d'un homme vigoureux qui n'a cependant avec lui que 300 soldats, le Gouverneur Joussef Bey, qui a apporté dans son commandement les traditions des Egyptiens, au service desquels il a été pendant longtemps. Néanmoins, bien que contenues, les mauvaises dispositions des Musulmans vis-à-vis des Chrétiens ne sont pas douteuses. Ces derniers tremblent de voir se réaliser les bruits habilement répandus sur notre prochain départ. Ils savent que, si nous quittons la Syrie avant d'avoir donné au pays des garanties sérieuses de tranquillité, la réaction contre eux serait terrible, et qu'ils ne peuvent compter pour les défendre sur les Turcs, dont ils n'attendent ni protection ni justice.

Quant à la Judée et à la Vallée du Jourdain, c'est toujours le pays de désolation et de désordre. Les routes à quelque distance de Jérusalem ne sont plus sûres, les Chrétiens ne voyagent pas sans l'exposer; leur situation est intolérable, et ils sentent qu'ils sont à la merci du fanatisme des Musulmans.

Jérusalem, Betléem, et leur banlieues, sont peut-être les parties de toute la Syrie dans lesquelles on s'aperçoit le moins de l'effet produit par les derniers événements. Le contact incessant des Européens, attirés par les Saints Lieux, semble avoir rendu les Musulmans plus tolérants, émoussé leur fanatisme. Néanmoins, la nouvelle des massacres y a produit une grande sensation, et les Chrétiens ont eu pendant plusieurs jours de sérieuses inquiétudes, augmentées surtout par l'attitude des soldats Turcs qui cherchaient à pousser au désordre, et par l'insouciance des autorités qui paraissaient fermer à dessin les yeux pour ne pas voir le mal prêt à se produire. Là, comme partout, après la secousse qui a en lieu, tout l'espoir est dans l'intervention et dans les garanties qu'elle donnera à la Syrie.

À Ramlé et à Jaffa, même situation, mêmes inquiétudes.

En résumant cet exposé d'une situation que j'ai voulu présenter telle qu'elle était réellement, on peut conclure :—

1. Que, si les massacres commencés dans le Liban, continués à Damas, ne se sont pas étendus dans tout le reste de la Syrie, cela n'est dû qu'à l'arrivée des troupes Françaises. Partout, les dispositions étaient prises pour une extermination générale, et personne ne niera aujourd'hui un vaste complot ourdi de longue main par le fanatisme Musulman.
2. Qu'une propagande active excite, encore à l'heure qu'il est, à la haine contre les Chrétiens, les populations jusqu'ici indifférentes des localités où ils vivaient depuis longtemps dans la plus grande sécurité.
3. Que les mauvaises dispositions des soldats et de la plupart des agents de la Porte sont évidentes, et qu'ils ne pardonnent point aux Chrétiens d'avoir attiré une intervention qu'ils considèrent comme une violation de la terre de l'Islamisme.
4. Que pour encourager les Musulmans, ôter l'espoir et la confiance aux Chrétiens, des bruits sont habilement répandus sur le prochain départ des troupes Françaises, l'appui que les Anglais prêteront à la Porte pour maintenir son autorité complète sur tout le pays, aux Druses pour les préserver du châtimeur qu'ils ont encouru.
5. Que l'opinion générale est que Fuad Pacha obéit à une direction qui lui est donnée de Constantinople, et qu'il ne cherche qu'à gagner du temps et à ménager les Musulmans et les Druses.
6. Que la misère des Chrétiens est horrible à Damas, dans le Liban, dans l'Anti-Liban, et dans des villes de la côte, et que partout la mortalité augmente dans des proportions effrayantes.
7. Que dans tout le pays l'industrie et le commerce souffrent lorsqu'ils n'ont point complètement cessé.
8. Que les rancunes et les haines augmentent et que la situation s'aggrave.
9. Enfin que tout l'espoir des Chrétiens est dans l'intervention de l'Europe, dans la France qui est venue si généreusement à leur secours, mais qui aussi,

sous peine de perdre son influence et de faillir au rôle qu'elle a entrepris au nom de l'humanité, est obligée aujourd'hui de réaliser cet espoir en obtenant pour la Syrie des mesures assez efficaces pour garantir sérieusement l'avenir.

Les Commissaires Européens étudient en ce moment la question d'organisation, et leurs rapports mettront bientôt, je l'espère, les Gouvernements à même de s'en occuper. Le remède est là aussi bien pour le présent que pour l'avenir. Les Turcs, dans les conditions où ils se trouvent, ont intérêt à affaiblir les Chrétiens et à ménager les Musulmans et les Druses; les premiers n'ont donc à attendre d'eux ni satisfaction réelle, ni secours sérieux, ni justice.

Je ne reviendrai point sur les bases d'organisation que j'ai développées dans mes précédents rapports; elles restent pour moi le moyen le plus pratique pour arriver à créer, sans susciter de nouveaux embarras, sans trop froisser les susceptibilités, un état de choses qui puisse donner aux Chrétiens la sécurité et la tranquillité dont ils ont besoin pour se relever. Si l'administration de toute la Syrie ne peut être Chrétienne et indépendante—ce qui serait évidemment la meilleure solution—si elle ne peut être détachée de la Porte, dont il faudrait maintenir l'intégrité, le Liban du moins doit avoir une organisation Chrétienne, et si nous l'obtenons nous aurons fait beaucoup pour tout le pays et rempli dignement le rôle que la France a accepté. Une idée vient de faire dans ces derniers temps d'assez grands progrès ici, et se trouve aujourd'hui discutée par la presse Européenne, c'est celle de la Viceroyauté de Fuad Pacha. Elle paraît être l'idée Anglaise, et il est hors de doute qu'elle est poursuivie activement par le Commissaire Extraordinaire du Sultan qui cherche à la propager par tous les moyens possibles. Je ne veux point apprécier encore si l'homme qui, depuis plus de six mois, cherche à entraver le bien que l'Europe veut faire ici, est bien celui qui offre toutes les garanties désirables, mais il est Turc, son administration restera Turque comme ses tendances; et si elle parvient à maintenir la tranquillité, elle ne donnera jamais le bien-être à des populations qu'il faut replacer dans la position qu'elles doivent occuper dans la société moderne, qui n'admet ni l'oppression ni l'esclavage. Le Liban a eu son temps de prospérité relative, avec une organisation qui a pour elle une longue expérience: qu'on lui rende cette organisation, si l'on ne peut en donner au pays entier une meilleure et une plus complète.

Tout en préparant aujourd'hui les chances de succès de l'idée qu'il poursuit, Fuad Pacha ne sort pas du rôle qui lui a été tracé par son Gouvernement et ne perd pas de vue le but à atteindre: celui de placer toutes les parties du pays sous l'action directe des Turcs et des Musulmans. Il me suffira pour lever tous les doutes, s'il en existait encore à ce sujet, de citer ici deux faits qui viennent de se passer. Tous les deux sont du reste les premières conséquences de la nomination de Joseph Bey Karam au Commandement de la Montagne du Nord, mesure habilement prise par Fuad Pacha et contre laquelle j'ai dû protester, parce qu'elle était pour moi une nouvelle atteinte au *statu quo* basé sur une organisation reconnue et qui ne pourrait être modifiée que par celle que l'Europe donnera définitivement au pays.

En nommant Joseph Bey Karam et en paraissant ainsi accorder une satisfaction aux Chrétiens, parce que la presse avait exagéré ses services, son influence et sa valeur, Fuad Pacha avait apprécié l'importance réelle du jeune Chef Maronite; il savait que dans aucun cas elle n'arriverait à lui créer un obstacle sérieux, et il prévoyait avec le discernement profond qu'il faut lui reconnaître, que ce commandement qu'il paraissait lui donner à la sollicitation de l'opinion publique deviendrait dès qu'il le voudrait la source des dissensions et des oppositions qui doivent amener la rupture du faisceau qu'ont formé en face du danger commun les Chrétiens de toutes les communions.

Cette mesure, habilement exploitée par les agents du Pacha, fut bientôt présentée dans tout le pays comme une organisation exclusivement en faveur des Maronites seuls protégés par la France. Les Grecs, froissés de ce que l'on ne tenait pas compte de leurs désirs ou de leurs sympathies, murmurèrent et semblèrent se rapprocher des Turcs, qui leur faisaient entrevoir dans l'organisation définitive du pays un commandement à part confié à l'un d'eux. Ces intrigues faillirent amener une scission complète, des listes circulèrent chez les Grecs pour demander la Vice-Royauté de Fuad Pacha, et l'influence éclairée des évêques a pu seule conjurer jusqu'ici un danger qui devait aider si puissamment la politique Turque. L'opposition des Grecs était naturelle: nous voulons bien, disaient-ils, accepter une organisation à laquelle nous sommes déjà habitués, nous

soumettre à des influences reconnues de tout temps; mais si la mesure est nouvelle, si le Chef est pris en dehors des familles importantes auxquelles nous avons toujours obéi, on doit consulter notre choix aussi bien que celui des Maronites.

Le second fait est aussi significatif. Il y a sept à huit jours, de cavaliers de Joseph Karam envoyé à Abadié, village mixte du Meten à proximité d'Hamana et dans les limites du Caimacam Chrézien, furent insultés par les Druses et l'un d'eux fut frappé et blessé légèrement. Fuad Pacha sous le prétexte que quelques Druses de Djourd, fuyant les arrestations, s'étaient réfugiés dans les bois aux environs d'Abadié et que des désordres pouvaient se produire, envoya Ahmed Pacha, Gouverneur de Beyrouth, sur les lieux, faisant ainsi intervenir directement l'autorité Turque dans la Montagne Chrétienne, et le fit suivre une heure après d'un détachement de 150 soldats du Nizam qui se sont établis dans le village. Fuad Pacha n'attendait que l'occasion d'occuper militairement quelques points du Caimacam du Nord, comme il a déjà fait occuper Abéi, Djézzin, et Moctara, dans la partie sud de la Montagne: l'occasion s'est présentée, il l'a saisie. Joseph Karam a protesté en demandant le retrait immédiat des troupes Ottomanes de son commandement, où seul il peut maintenir l'ordre, et en offrant sa démission dans le cas contraire. Ahmed Pacha n'a pas voulu prendre sur lui de trancher la question; l'un et l'autre ont écrit à Fuad Pacha, qui répond d'une manière évasive à Joseph Karam de conserver son commandement, sans lui parler des troupes. L'affaire en est là, et j'ai su du Représentant de la France que d'un commun accord les Commissaires Européens allaient protester de leur côté contre un acte qui constitue une nouvelle violation à un ordre de choses qui ne peut être modifié que par une organisation définitive.

Le but de Fuad Pacha est donc évident. Il a déjà introduit l'action directe des Turcs dans la Montagne Druse, en créant les quatre commandements de Deir-el-Kamar, Moctara, d'Abéi, et de Djézzin. Il cherche aujourd'hui à désunir les Chrétiens mécontents de la nomination d'un Chef Maronite, en faisant entrevoir aux Grecs unis qu'il leur donnera un Chef à part, en faisant la même promesse aux Grecs schismatiques; et il veut arriver à l'occupation des points militaires de la Montagne du Nord pour compléter ainsi une organisation qui, toute provisoire qu'elle paraît être, pourrait, si des difficultés s'élevaient en Europe, si les Puissances voulaient en finir avec cette question de Syrie, passer pour une solution acceptable.

Fuad Pacha, il faut le reconnaître, a l'intelligence de la situation et poursuit avec constance et persévérance le but qu'il se propose depuis son arrivée ici. Il veut affaiblir les Chrétiens et cherche pour cela à les désunir; il veut augmenter l'influence Musulmane et ménager les Druses. Tous ses actes sont habilement calculés. Tout l'effet qu'il cherche à produire consiste à satisfaire l'opinion publique par des mesures qu'il annonce à grand bruit, mais qu'il ne met plus à exécution dès que l'effet est produit. En lisant l'exposé de ces mesures, on croit à des faits importants; en cherchant les résultats obtenus, on ne tarde pas à se convaincre qu'elles ne sont qu'un moyen de calmer peu à peu les sentiments d'indignation qui ont poussé l'Europe à s'occuper des événements de Syrie, et de gagner du temps.

Veillez, &c.
(Signé) BEAUFORT.

No. 363.

Earl Conley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received January 30.)

(No. 160.)

My Lord,

Paris, January 29, 1861.

IN my despatch No. 1,003 of the 31st of July last I stated that M. Thouvenel, in a conference held that day on the question of the occupation of Syria, had said that circumstances might arise over which the French Government could have no control, such as illness among the troops, or continued bad weather on a very exposed coast, which might physically prevent the fulfilment of Article V of the Convention, namely, that which fixes the period of occupation.

It appears, from such information as I can obtain, that the latter of these

contingencies is not unlikely to arise, and that it may be next to impossible to embark troops from Beyrout during the month of March, and even of April.

I am tempted, therefore, to ask your Lordship whether advantage may not be taken of this uncertainty, and whether it may not form the basis of an arrangement which, while meeting to a certain extent the wishes of the French Government, may still realize the desire of Her Majesty's Government for the early evacuation of Syria. Might it not be agreed that squadrons from the different Powers should be sent in lieu of the army of occupation, but that, in consequence of the uncertain weather generally prevailing on the coast of Syria during the months of March and April, and the consequent difficulty of embarking troops at that season, or of keeping ships on the coast, the change should not be effected until the 15th of April or 1st of May.

I should, however, state fairly to your Lordship that I have no doubt whatever that if, when the Conference meets, the Porte shall demand the strict execution of the Convention of the 5th of September, and that that demand shall receive the support of Her Majesty's Government, the French Government will comply with it, subject to the contingency which I have alluded to above; but I am equally sure that the enforcing the fulfilment of such a demand will cause the greatest irritation here, and I am apprehensive of the consequences it may have on the future relations of France with the Porte.

In submitting this suggestion for the consideration of Her Majesty's Government, I rather wish to ask that latitude to this extent should be left me, in case I should eventually consider it desirable to make use of it than that any formal proposal should now be made to the French Government. An arrangement of this nature should rather be the result of the discussions of the Conference than of an understanding between the two Governments.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

No. 364.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received January 30.)

(No. 165. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Paris, January 29, 1861.

IN continuation of my despatch No. 156 of yesterday's date, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that I was received yesterday afternoon by the Emperor.

I stated to His Majesty that I had asked permission to see him in consequence of the letter which he had done me the honour to address to me, and which required longer explanations than could well be given in writing. Referring to the contents of the letter itself, I said that His Majesty had appealed to me to obtain the equitable consideration by Her Majesty's Government of the state of Syria, while it was my duty to appeal to His Majesty for an equitable consideration of the engagements which he had contracted.

Although I had taken the precaution to carry with me a copy of the Protocol of the 3rd of August, which regulates and assigns the reasons for the expedition of a body of French troops to Syria, I fear that I failed in making His Majesty clearly understand the difference between the duties assigned to them and those devolving on the European Commission, nor did he seem to be aware that he is positively bound to withdraw his troops at the period fixed by the Convention of the 5th September. His Majesty constantly said not only that he was ready, but that he was most anxious to bring his troops back to France (for their maintenance in Syria was a great expense to him), and that he would do so as soon as a government was organized for the Lebanon, as he should then consider himself absolved from all further responsibility. His Majesty adverted to his own personal position in this question: he said that it was difficult for him to turn a deaf-ear to the numerous petitions which were addressed to him from the Maronites, praying for continued protection; that the Catholic Party in France were narrowly watching all his proceedings, and that he could not excuse himself either to one or the other, were the departure of the French troops to be the signal for fresh massacres.

I said that I thought His Majesty might combine the protection which he wished to ensure to the Maronites, with a due regard for the engagements that he had contracted. Might not, I asked, the troops of occupation be replaced by naval squadrons on the coast, which would afford all the protection required, without violating the sovereign rights of the Sultan? The Emperor objected that the interior of the country would not come within the observation of a naval force; but I replied that any one who knew anything of those countries might feel certain that the presence of squadrons on the coast, able to disembark, if necessary, troops of marines, would be quite sufficient for the purpose of preventing any great disturbances. I pressed this arrangement on the Emperor very strongly, and I am not without hopes that my observations made some impression upon His Majesty.

The Emperor having, in the course of the conversation, constantly alluded to the contents of General Beaufort's despatch, of which I had the honour to transmit a copy to your Lordship yesterday, as showing that the state of Syria rendered a prolongation of the occupation necessary, I said that although I admitted that His Majesty was justified in relying on the reports of his own agents, I must be permitted to claim for my Government an equal confidence in the veracity of British Agents. But the reports received from Syria by Her Majesty's Government differed in many essential points from those furnished by General Beaufort. I would not trouble His Majesty, I continued, by entering into too many details, but there was one very essential point to which I would allude; viz., that whereas General Beaufort seemed to think that continued French occupation of Syria was to be a panacea for all the misery to which the inhabitants of that unfortunate country were now subjected, there were many who were convinced that the occupation tended indirectly to perpetuate them, that is, that the Maronites, trusting under French protection to exterminate their feudal enemies, and obtain possession of their territory, would do nothing for themselves, while they nourished the most preposterous ideas of becoming the sole rulers of the Mountain. On the other hand, the presence of French troops inspired not unnaturally considerable jealousy in the Turks, and mistrust and irritation among the Druses; so that, in fact, all progress towards a settled form of government seemed at a dead lock.

I did not omit to notice, by citing the example of Rome, how easily a temporary occupation is converted into a permanent one; and the Emperor replied, without hesitation, that I was quite right.

I will not trouble your Lordship with any further details of this conversation, which had little other apparent result than an expression of the Emperor's desire that the influence of all the Powers would be employed to engage the Porte to institute, without further delay, a Government of some kind in the Mountain.

I am persuaded myself—and this persuasion is not so much founded on the Emperor's own assurances to me as on a comparison of what I hear from others—that the hesitation evinced by His Majesty to order the evacuation of Syria proceeds from no other motives than those alleged by himself and by M. Thouvenel; and that, were the organization of an Administration of the Lebanon to be announced as complete, to-morrow all opposition to the departure of the troops would cease. If the Legislative Body had not been about to meet, we should, I believe, have heard nothing upon the subject at all; but the Emperor probably wishes to counteract the bad impression made in some minds through his proceedings with regard to the Pope, by pointing to the protection which he has given to Catholicism in Syria and China, and he is afraid that, if his troops are withdrawn from the former country before its reorganization is settled, he may be accused of abandoning the Maronites to the tender mercies of the Turks. However, I am quite prepared to find that others do not share this opinion; nor can I expect that, after all that has occurred, justifiable doubts should not be entertained of the Emperor's good faith. I merely, as in duty bound, state my own convictions, leaving it to Her Majesty's Government to give such weight to them as they may consider them to deserve.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

Lord J. Russell to Earl Cowley.

(No. 130.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, January 30, 1861.

I HAVE received and laid before the Queen your Excellency's despatch No. 152 of the 28th instant.

Her Majesty's Government trust that, with some further explanations, the question of the evacuation of Syria by European troops may be settled by general agreement.

M. Thouvenel fears that Syria may be left by the French armed force in a worse state than they found it. But to arrive at this conclusion he adopts premises for which, in the opinion of Her Majesty's Government, there is no solid foundation. He says that the Mountain then had an Administration of its own, founded on an arrangement between the five Powers and the Porte. At the present moment there is no Government at all except the supreme power of the Porte.

The state of the case appears to Her Majesty's Government somewhat differently. A Commission has been instituted with a view, not only to insure the punishment of the guilty and reparation to the sufferers, but to organize an Administration for the Lebanon calculated to ensure peace for the future. This Commission has not yet reported. If its report tends to a more independent action of the Porte's officers in Syria, it will probably be rejected at Constantinople. If the arrangements proposed by the Porte tend to deprive the Christians of their privileges, those arrangements will not be approved of by the five Powers.

The discussions may be protracted, they may be extended over many months, but the inference to be drawn from these circumstances is not that European troops should remain in Syria indefinitely, but that, until new provisions are agreed upon, the arrangements made in 1842, and completed in 1845, should subsist.

It is true that sudden disorders may at times require a prompt remedy. It is true that, after what has occurred, the exercise of authority by a Druse Kaimakam might excite apprehension, and therefore no such officer should be appointed. But a Christian Kaimakam has been already appointed, and no one can fairly complain of the selection. He exercises, and will continue to exercise, the powers belonging to the Kaimakam of the Christians. He is himself a Maronite of a very fair and conciliatory character. All that appears necessary to Her Majesty's Government, therefore, is—

1. To declare that, until new provisions are agreed upon, the arrangements of 1845 in reference to the security and protection of the Christians of the Mountain remain in full force.

2. That France and Great Britain should take care to maintain, throughout the spring and summer, a naval force on the coast of Syria for the protection and succour of the Christian inhabitants.

Her Majesty's Government are glad to receive the admission of M. Thouvenel, that, if the Porte should insist on the evacuation of Syria at the period stipulated by the Convention, the troops must go.

For the present, the matter must rest on this issue. If the Porte should decline to be a Party to any fresh Convention, stipulating for the continued occupation of Syria, the Convention of September falls to the ground, and the evacuation will take place at the termination of the period during which that Convention is in force. The responsibility of France towards Europe and towards the Maronites will be amply covered by this proceeding.

I am, &c.

(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

Aali Pasha to M. Musurus.—(Communicated to Lord J. Russell by M. Musurus, January 28.)

M. l'Ambassadeur,

Le 16 Janvier, 1861.

J'AI l'honneur de vous envoyer, ci-joint, copie d'une lettre que son Excellence Fuad Pacha vient de m'adresser. Elle contient la réfutation de l'accusation lancée gratuitement contre nos autorités militaires au sujet de la première opération qu'elles ont faite dans la Montagne Druse.

Vous voudrez bien, M. l'Ambassadeur, vous en prévaloir pour détruire complètement l'effet que des rapports erronés ont pu produire autour de vous relativement à la conduite de nos troupes, conduite irréprochable sous tous les rapports, et à laquelle sont dus les résultats dont tout le monde reconnaît aujourd'hui la valeur.

Je vous prie, &c.

(Signé) AALI.

Inclosure in No. 365.*

Fuad Pasha to Aali Pasha.

Le 2 Janvier, 1861.

J'AI remarqué avec un sentiment bien pénible, dans une des correspondances de nos Ambassades que votre Altesse avait bien voulu me transmettre, une accusation assez grave contre les autorités militaires Ottomanes au sujet de la première opération qu'elles ont faite dans la Montagne Druse. Le Général de Beaufort s'est plaint à son Gouvernement de ce que, non seulement je n'ai pas accepté franchement sa co-opération, mais que j'ai favorisé la fuite des Druses vers le Hauran.

Le Commandant-en-chef du corps expéditionnaire Français a un caractère trop loyal pour ne pas admettre que je lui ai donné toute la part qui a été convenue entre lui et moi dans toutes les opérations faites dans la Montagne; je n'ai rien fait de contraire à cette entente. J'ai accepté toute sa co-opération dans les limites que la Convention de Paris avait tracées, et que l'affaire elle-même pouvait admettre. Si j'ai rendu inutile la présence des troupes Françaises à Damas, ce n'est pas un crime pour moi.

Quant à ce qu'avance M. de Beaufort au sujet de la retraite de quelques Chefs Druses vers le Hauran, il semble nous accuser de leur faciliter les moyens d'échapper à la punition que j'ai été appelé à leur infliger. Ce que j'ai fait avant nos opérations par l'arrestation des Chefs Druses les plus influentes, et ce que je viens de faire dans ce moment-ci en arrêtant près de 1,500 individus dans trois jours, sans porter la moindre perturbation dans la Montagne, où les Chrétiens se rétablissent peu-à-peu, donne un démenti éclatant à toutes ces assertions.

Ceci établi, je passe à l'examen des faits: tout homme qui connaît ce pays et sa configuration topographique n'hésitera pas un moment à déclarer que, quelle que soit la vigilance qu'on puisse mettre, il est de toute impossibilité de couper la retraite aux individus ou à de petites bandes qui, nourris dans ces montagnes, en connaissent tous les détours; ils ont mille issues pour échapper, tout rocher leur sert de route, tandis que, pour ceux qui les poursuivent, ils ne trouvent pas même des chemins pour aller d'un lieu à un autre. J'ai présidé en personne ces opérations; je me suis donné toutes les peines du monde, et je me suis même, je pourrai le dire, exposé à tous les dangers pour faire tomber entre mes mains les coupables qui cherchaient leur impunité dans leur fuite, et nous n'avons pu faire tomber dans nos filets qu'une centaine d'individus. Ce sont ces difficultés qui m'ont fait chercher d'autres moyens qui viennent d'obtenir une réussite complète. Je ne prétends pas avoir une grande compétence dans la tactique militaire; mais je puis m'appuyer sur une autorité que tout le monde doit reconnaître; c'est celle de Férik Ismail Pacha (Général Kmety), qui m'a secondé en personne dans toutes ces opérations, et qui est prêt à répondre à tous les reproches qu'on pourra faire contre nos actes.

Veuillez, &c.

(Signé) FUAD.

Lord J. Russell to Earl Cowley.

(No. 132.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, January 30, 1861.

M. MUSURUS called upon me yesterday, and informed me that he had received a telegram from Aali Pasha dated the 28th instant, and stating that a proposal had been made by the French Government to the Porte for the convocation of the Conference, in order to decide whether the evacuation of Syria should be effected at the period specified in the Convention, or should be deferred. The desire of the Porte, Aali Pasha went on to say, was that the foreign occupation of Syria should close at the time already fixed, and that the Turkish Government considered that it was fully competent to provide alone for the tranquillity of Syria and the security of its inhabitants. Finally, Aali Pasha desired M. Musurus to ascertain the opinion of Her Majesty's Government in regard to the meeting of the Conference, and if it should meet, how far the Porte might reckon upon a result in conformity with its desire to put an end to the present state of things in Syria.

I informed M. Musurus that Her Majesty's Government could not give any advice to the Porte respecting the re-assembling of the Conference. That Her Majesty's Government will direct the Ambassador of Her Majesty to attend such Conference only in case of the presence of the Representative of the Sultan at the Conference. That it is the opinion of Her Majesty's Government that, in case the Porte does not wish to renew the Convention, it should declare to the allied Powers that the Sultan has means to prevent a renewal of massacre, and that until other conditions are agreed to, the arrangement of 1845 for the government of the Mountain will remain in force.

I am, &c.

(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 367.

Lord J. Russell to Sir H. Bulwer.

(No. 60.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, January 30, 1861.

I TRANSMIT, for your Excellency's information, a copy of a despatch which M. Thouvenel addressed on the 18th instant to the French Ambassador at this Court,* expressing the desire of the Government of the Emperor to ascertain the opinions of the Powers, parties to the Convention which limited the occupation of Syria by foreign troops to six months, in regard to postponing the term fixed by the Convention for the evacuation of Syria.

You will perceive from the inclosed copy of a despatch which I have addressed to Earl Cowley,† the views of Her Majesty's Government on the questions raised in M. Thouvenel's despatch, and I have to instruct you to urge the Porte not to delay sending instructions to its Ministers as to the course which it is prepared to take respecting Syria, and as to its views on the question of a prolonged employment of foreign troops in that country. The Porte should likewise state what security it will give that the massacres shall not be renewed.

I am, &c.

(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 368.

Lord J. Russell to Sir H. Bulwer.

(No. 64.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, January 30, 1861.

M. MUSURUS called upon me yesterday, and informed me that he had received a telegram from Aali Pasha dated the 28th instant, and stating that a proposal had been made by the French Government to the Porte for the convocation of the Conference, in order to decide whether the evacuation of

* No. 342.

† No. 346.

Syria should be effected at the period specified in the Convention, or should be deferred. The desire of the Porte, Aali Pasha went on to say, was that the foreign occupation of Syria should cease at the time already fixed, and that the Turkish Government considered that it was fully competent to provide alone for the tranquillity of Syria and the security of its inhabitants. Finally, Aali Pasha desired M. Musurus to ascertain the opinion of Her Majesty's Government in regard to the meeting of the Conference, and if it should meet, how far the Porte might reckon upon a result in conformity with its desire to put an end to the present state of things in Syria.

I informed M. Musurus that Her Majesty's Government could not give any advice to the Porte respecting the re-assembling of the Conference; that Her Majesty's Government will direct the Ambassador of Her Majesty to attend such Conference only in case of the presence of the Representative of the Sultan at the Conference; that it is the opinion of Her Majesty's Government that, in case the Porte does not wish to renew the Convention, it should declare to the allied Powers that the Sultan has means to prevent a renewal of the massacre, and that until other conditions are agreed to, the arrangement of 1845 for the government of the Mountain will remain in force.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 369.

Lord J. Russell to Sir H. Bulwer.

(No. 65.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, January 31, 1861.

WITH reference to what is contained in your Excellency's despatch No. 50 of the 18th instant, I have to state to you that if the Turkish Government entertain the sentiments which Aali Pasha has expressed to you, they will of course state them when the Report of the Commission on the Affairs of Syria has been made, and has to be considered by the Porte and the Five Powers.

In the meantime the Sultan's Government will, no doubt, consider itself bound to adhere to the arrangements made in 1842 and 1845.

It is not because the Christians have been the victims of massacre and outrage that they are to be deprived of any of the safeguards which, in other years, were solemnly promised to be given to them by the organs of the Sublime Porte.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 370.

Lord J. Russell to Earl Cowley.

(No. 134.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, January 31, 1861.

I AM sorry that Her Majesty's Government cannot consent to grant your Excellency that discretion which you propose in your despatch No. 160 of the 29th instant.

On reading your Excellency's various despatches and their inclosures, it is obvious that the French Government maintain that until some new mode of governing Syria has been devised, which will prevent conflicts between Druses and Maronites for the future, the European or French occupation ought to continue.

If France continues on this ground, it is obvious that a postponement for two months would merely strengthen the Church party in France and in Syria, which desires to deprive the Turks of the Province of Syria. Should the French Government entirely abandon this ground, and ask for a renewal of the Convention to the 1st of May, on the ground of weather, you will inform me of the circumstance, and at the same time desire the Ambassadors of Austria and Turkey at Paris to communicate it to their Governments.

It may be necessary to repeat that Her Majesty would not authorize you

to attend any Conference on the affairs of Syria at which the Representative of Turkey should not be present.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 371.

Lord J. Russell to Earl Cowley.

(No. 135. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, January 31, 1861.

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 165, Confidential, of the 29th instant, reporting, in continuation of your despatch No. 156 of the 28th instant, the substance of a conversation which your Excellency has had with His Imperial Majesty on the subject of the prolonged occupation of Syria. Her Majesty's Government are willing to make every allowance for the Emperor's personal position. The Maronites in Syria, a fierce and implacable tribe, wish to exterminate their enemies; the Church party in France wish to extend the influence of the Pope and the Clergy over all Asia as well as over all Europe: but surely neither of these bodies has any right to call on the Emperor to violate his engagements, or to assist them in committing injustice to the inhabitants of Syria of a different faith.

The Emperor alleges as one reason for wishing to prolong the occupation of Syria by French troops that he could not turn a deaf ear to the numerous petitions addressed to him from the Maronites, praying for continued protection; but the answer to this is, that if the stay of French troops in Syria was to continue as long as the Maronite Priesthood, who have demanded the massacre of 4,600 male Druses in revenge for the massacres of the Maronites, could persuade their flocks to petition for a continuance of that French occupation through the means of which they hope for the accomplishment of their bloodthirsty desires, the stay of the French troops might continue as long as the occupation of Rome by a French force has lasted; and it is also to be remarked that if the desires of the Maronites were in this respect to be allowed to overrule the solemn engagements of France and the will of the Sovereign of Syria, there would be no difficulty in obtaining an equal number of petitions from the Druses addressed to the British Government, praying for a British military force to protect them from the attacks of the Maronites, and it is unnecessary to point out that if Her Majesty's Government were to act upon the grounds on which the Emperor places the course he wishes to pursue, the good relations between Great Britain and France would not be of long continuance, though such a proceeding on the part of Great Britain would be quite as just as that which is contemplated by His Imperial Majesty.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 372.

Lord J. Russell to Lord Dufferin.

(No. 65.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, January 31, 1861.

HAVING communicated to Sir Moses Montefiore a copy of the accompanying letter from Fuad Pasha to the Grand Vizier respecting the treatment of the Jews of Damascus, I have received from him the letter of which I inclose a copy to your Lordship.

Sir Moses Montefiore adverts to the case of the Jew whom Fuad Pasha states to be still in prison under the charge of murder, and I have to instruct your Lordship to take any steps in your power to ensure that this man should be treated with strict justice, and his further trial be conducted with fairness.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 373.

Lord Dufferin to Lord J. Russell.—(Received January 31.)

(No. 57.)

My Lord,

Beyrout, January 18, 1861.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Lordship's information, copy of a despatch I have received from Fuad Pasha in reply to the representations I addressed to your Excellency respecting the persecution of Protestants at Nazareth.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure in No. 373.

Fuad Pasha to Lord Dufferin.

My Lord,

Mokhtarah, le 13 Janvier, 1861.

J'AI eu l'honneur de recevoir la lettre que vous m'avez adressée le 6 Janvier courant, relative aux Protestants domiciliés à Nazareth, qui ont été l'objet de mauvais procédés de la part des Chrétiens Catholiques et Grecs. Le Gouvernement du Sultan dans sa sollicitude toute paternelle ayant reconnu une communauté distincte pour ses sujets qui professent la religion réformée, il lui a octroyé les mêmes privilèges qu'aux autres communautés Chrétiennes, et son désir est qu'ils jouissent de la plénitude de ces privilèges dans tout le territoire Ottoman. Aussi, my Lord, me suis-je empressé d'écrire au Gouverneur de la Palestine, qu'il veille à ce que des pareils actes ne se renouvellent pas, et qu'il mette tous ses soins à sévir contre ce qui serait contraire aux vues libérales du Gouvernement Impérial. Par la même occasion, j'ai adressé de sévères reprimandes aux autorités de Nazareth qui n'ont pas fait respecter les lois de l'Empire dans la circonstance que vous relatez, et j'espère qu'à l'avenir aucun fait de ce genre ne troublera les sujets du Sultan qui professent le Protestantisme.

Veuillez, &c.
(Signé) FUAD.

No. 374.

Lord Dufferin to Lord J. Russell.—(Received January 31.)

(No. 58.)

My Lord,

Beyrout, January 18, 1861.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Lordship's information, an extract from a despatch which I have received from Major Fraser, dated Mokhtarah, January 15, relative to a further requisition I had forwarded to his Excellency Fuad Pasha from the Protestants of Nazareth.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure in No. 374.

Major Fraser to Lord Dufferin.

(Extract.)

Mokhtarah, January 15, 1861.

I HAVE since had the honour to read to his Excellency Fuad Pasha the whole of the documents describing the particular acts complained of, together with your Lordship's remarks thereupon.

His Excellency stated that his reprimand to the Mudir, together with his order for the arrest of Michael Jebran, which left Mokhtarah by express on the 7th instant, would have arrived at Nazareth a day or two after the date of Mr. Zeller's last application for redress; that, therefore, there was reason to believe no further disturbance would occur; and his Excellency having written

at the same time to Mustapha Pasha, of Acre, to inquire into and report the whole circumstances, he had no doubt this was now being done.

As both the Mudir and Cadi had, however, gravely compromised themselves by their evident bad faith, and connivance at these acts, I have requested the Pasha to suspend both these functionaries from "their respective offices, and to send them to Acre, pending an investigation of their conduct." His Excellency at once agreed to this, and will transmit to Nazareth the necessary instructions in the course of to-day.

No. 375.

Lord Dufferin to Lord J. Russell.—(Received January 31.)

(No. 59.)

My Lord,

Beyrout, January 18, 1861.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Lordship's information, copies of further despatches which I have this day addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at the Porte.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 375.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, January 17, 1861.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Excellency's information, copy of the substance of a private letter I have received from Major Fraser, relative to the conduct of the Christian notables on the authority of whose denunciations several hundred Druses have been arrested on the charge of murder.

I have recommended his Excellency Fuad Pasha to act in such a way as to defeat the ill-intentioned efforts of the priesthood, at whose instigation this obstinacy and silence is maintained.

I am happy to say that Joussef Keram has been induced to act in opposition to Bishop Tobia on this occasion; and at his invitation some trustworthy evidence will be forthcoming.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 2 in No. 375.

Major Fraser to Lord Dufferin.

(Extract.)

Mokhtarah, January 14, 1861.

THE Christian Deputies assembled here from the different towns and villages of the country had yesterday an interview of two or three hours' duration with Fuad Pasha.

His Excellency told them that his mission to Syria had three objects in view, viz., repression, reparation, and reorganization. That the first had been in a great measure accomplished. With the second he was now engaged; but to bring it to a successful termination he required the aid of the Christians. To the third he would proceed by-and-by. In the meantime, as a portion of the second measure, he was proceeding with the punishment of the Druses. In order to accomplish this satisfactorily, he required them to point out the most guilty among the prisoners he had arrested, and to furnish him with the evidence against these persons.

The Christians replied that they could not point out individuals further than they had done; that they had already sent in lists of the leaders in the

various massacres, all of whom were guilty, and they now awaited the infliction of the penalty these deserved at the hands of the Government.

After a long discussion, to show that the summary punishment of many hundreds of prisoners, without a formal trial, and the opportunity of hearing the evidence against them, or of making such defence as they could, was a course quite inconsistent with justice, and one which would not be permitted by the general sentiment of Europe, which did not demand a wholesale slaughter, the Christians persisted in saying they could give no more detailed evidence than had already been supplied in furnishing the lists above referred to.

His Excellency then informed them that he would have a declaration drawn up to the effect that they refused to point out the principal among the prisoners now detained here, or to give evidence against individuals, which he would require them to sign. This they also said they could not do.

After some warm discussion, during which his Excellency had occasion to say that at this rate it would be difficult to give them satisfaction; but when he had done the best he could to administer justice without their aid, and to place affairs on what he might consider a proper footing, those who were still dissatisfied would be at perfect liberty to proceed to some other portion of the Empire, or to quit it altogether, if they preferred that course,—it was agreed they should consider till to-day, when they would give a final reply.

To-day they appeared before the Commission appointed for the trial of the prisoners, and stated that they adhered to their statement of yesterday. They could give no further evidence than they had already done in sending in the names of the principal criminals, and that having done so, they now expected satisfaction from the Government.

They were informed that the Government having now assumed the position of Public Prosecutor on the lists sent in, without in any degree denying the value of these lists, yet required the aid of the Christians in furnishing the details and evidence against individuals, in order to assure their legal conviction of crimes which the accused would, in all probability, deny as having been committed by the particular individuals under trial, however certain it might be to have been the work of some Druse or Druses. After many vague replies they always returned to the same—that they could not give the evidence required, nor point out any individual more guilty than their neighbours, referring to the long lists formerly sent in as the only aid they could give.

The Mufti then requested them to make that statement in writing; this they declined to do. He then asked them to allow their reply to be written in Court, and to affix their signatures; they refused this also. They were willing to speak it, but not to write it or to allow it to be written. It was felt impossible to proceed at this rate, and as some indignation was shown by the Court, at the request of the Christians they were again allowed till to-morrow (15th) to make up their minds what they would do.

And thus the matter stands this evening. I ought to say that I have this information of proceedings from Fuad Pasha himself; I had no intimation that they were to appear before the Commission to-day, otherwise I should have sent to watch the proceedings. This morning I was informed they were writing a petition to Fuad Pasha; they appear afterwards to have changed their intention. I have not the slightest doubt, in my own mind, that these deputies are quite capable of furnishing all the information and evidence that Fuad Pasha requires, and withhold it from factious motives and by concerted plan, evidently with a view to arrest the action of the Government unless it comply with their demand for summary and general execution of the Druses whose names they have sent to the number, I believe, of at least 1,200. This idea is borne out by the following facts: I sent yesterday for two of the Hasbeya Deputies; I asked them to point out to me the principal criminals among the prisoners now here; they replied to me as they did to Fuad Pasha—an answer evidently preconcerted. After a good deal of fencing, I said, "I see you know no details; of course you gave no names to the list." One said, "Oh! yes." I said, "Indeed! how many did you give?" "Five." "Will you name them?" "So-and-so," &c. "But you knew no particulars against them?" "Oh! yes, I do. The first I saw kill the old Emir Saad-ed-Deen; the second, I only saw in the Serai at Hasbeya during the massacre; the third, I saw also helping the first to murder So-and-so; the fourth, I saw murder such another person," naming the Emir Jaghja, and so on. I quietly wrote down their statement, by which I

found that these two Deputies had been eye-witnesses of several assassinations—several of the assassins being now in prison. Yet, until by a kind of ruse this was extracted, they persisted in telling even me they could point out no one as particularly guilty, and could give no details in evidence, while they were actually capable of giving the very best.

Inclosure 3 in No. 375.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, January 17, 1861.

HAVING had reason to fear that his Excellency Fuad Pasha was disposed to take advantage of the false position in which the Druses have placed themselves—probably at the instigation of their Turkish rulers—to deal with the Chiefs of the nation in a manner prompted rather by instincts of jealousy and self-preservation than by those of justice, I have written a despatch to Major Fraser, copy of which I have the honour to inclose, couched in terms calculated to enable that officer to use such language in his confidential communication with his Excellency as shall induce him to act with greater impartiality.

In doing so, I trust your Excellency will not think my expressions too severe. This step has been taken rather as a precaution to guard against a possible tendency, than as a remonstrance against what has taken place; and in a private letter to Major Fraser, I have begged him to be careful to communicate any statements to Fuad Pasha in such a way as shall neither be mortifying nor offensive.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 4 in No. 375.

Lord Dufferin to Major Fraser.

Sir,

Beyrout, January 16, 1861.

YOU are already aware that in my opinion the best chance of obtaining a good government for this country consists in detaching its administration from its present dependence on a distant capital; in rendering the head of the new government personally responsible for what occurs within his jurisdiction; in recommending to his adoption certain improvements in the administrative departments of his Pashalic; and in subjecting his government to such an amount of supervision as is implied by the residence at his Court of Political Agents from the Five Powers.

With guarantees like these, and under the auspices of an able man, it is to be hoped that the motley population of Syria will enjoy greater tranquillity and happiness than has yet fallen to their share. The barbarous distinctions which have hitherto divided its inhabitants into innumerable tribes and sects may be expected gradually to soften down; differences of race and of religion will to a certain extent become subordinate to those social relations which a community of interests will establish; and the petty feuds which for so many years have deluged not merely the Lebanon, but every quarter of the province with blood, will become as impossible as they now are in Scotland, or in other countries where a state of society at one time not a whit less disorderly has long since disappeared beneath the beneficent influences of civilization.

Under these circumstances, and with this prospect, I am disposed to think that it will be advisable to abolish the anomalous privileges of the Lebanon, and to assimilate its administration with that of the rest of the Province.

Unhappily, there is one consideration which may induce some hesitation in arriving at so natural a conclusion. For years past the Turks have exhibited towards the Christian and Druse inhabitants of this favoured district an ungenerous and vindictive jealousy. Unable to subject them immediately to their own control, they have encouraged anarchy and created discord, in the hopes of

insinuating their own authority. The late events may be considered the result of this policy.

Before, therefore, consenting to deprive these two unhappy tribes of the protection afforded them by their semi-independence, one is naturally anxious to ascertain whether there is any likelihood that the new Governor will take advantage of the circumstance to exhibit towards either of them that traditional ill-will to which they have hitherto been obnoxious. One would hope that an intelligent man, who rightly appreciated his position and his duties, would be ready at once to abandon the inhuman traditions of the Porte upon this subject, and make it a point of honour to deal so considerately with those whom Europe will have thus confided to his charge, as to leave them no room to regret the abolition of their ancient privileges. Some assurance upon this head is absolutely necessary; and a sense of justice will require it as much on behalf of the Druses as of the Christians.

The intervention of Europe, in the opinion not only of Her Majesty's Government, but also in that of the Government of France, as expressed by M. Thouvenel to Lord Cowley, is directed to insure the future well-being of either tribe. Any securities, therefore, that it may be necessary to require for the Christians, are equally to be extended to the Druses. Nay, the future relations of the Druses to the Government ought even to be a matter of greater solicitude than that of the Christians. These latter will always retain the sympathies of Europe, and the slightest inclination exhibited by the Syrian Government to fail in its duties towards them will be unanimously checked by the Representatives of the Five Powers. But a similar anxiety will never be exhibited on behalf of the Druse nation.

To those who have but superficially examined the course of the late events, the Druses are little better than barbarous assassins; any oppression to which they may become subject will probably be a matter of indifference to a majority of the European Governments, and a jealous or designing Viceroy would be able to vent his malice upon them with impunity. Even in the conduct of so enlightened a person as his Excellency Fuad Pasha, a tendency to abet the illicit encroachments of the Central Government is observable.

Taking advantage of the opportunity afforded him by the late disturbances, he has put the Porte in complete possession of half the Mountain; he has sequestered the estates of the Druse aristocracy; he has occupied the palace, and even confiscated the personal property, of the wealthiest of the Druse Chiefs, although its owner has not yet been proved guilty of any direct participation in the late events. He has visited the richer Sheikhs with an indiscriminating severity, which his excessive leniency towards the chief citizens of Damascus renders the more striking; and to crown all, his Extraordinary Tribunal has proposed to the Commission that all the Druse Mokatajdjis should be capitally punished, while the Turkish authorities, upon whom alone must rest the principal responsibility of what has occurred, are let off with the lighter penalty. Such incomprehensible conduct would almost lead one to fear that Turkish rule is becoming an impossibility, and that the views of Turkish policy are incorrigible. Although, therefore, we may be willing to harmonise the political privileges of the Mountain with the other institutions of the Province, it can only be on condition that the civil and social rights of all its inhabitants, Christian or non-Christian, are religiously respected.

The right of the Druse nation to the maintenance of an undisturbed existence in the Lebanon, on the slopes of Mount Hermon, in the Wadi-et-Teim, and amid the other ancient habitations of their race, is as indefeasible as that of the Christians to occupy the Kesrouan. Their privileges are immemorial, and Her Britannic Majesty's Government will never be a party to any arrangement which will put them into jeopardy.

I am myself of opinion that if the future administration of the country were conducted on rational principles, it would be far preferable to entrust the protection of those in whom we are interested to its intelligence and impartiality, than to the doubtful safeguard of anomalous and ill-defined privileges. Such privileges are at best a bad expedient invented to protect those who enjoy them against the ill effects of a worse Government.

When a good Government is in operation, they are an embarrassment to the rulers, and a disadvantage to the ruled. If, however, instead of witnessing evidences of a more magnanimous disposition, an inclination is perceptible in

Fuad Pasha to take advantage of the false position in which the Druses have been placed by circumstances, the real nature of which is probably better appreciated by his Excellency than by any one else, in order to continue that baneful policy which has at last outworn the patience of Europe; if the Druse aristocracy are to be destroyed, their possessions indiscriminately confiscated, and the whole nation reduced to a state of servile impotence, in order to gratify the jealousy of a Government which can only maintain its own eminence by debasing those it rules, it will necessarily become a question with me whether I shall be justified in consenting to abolish privileges which the persistent injustice of all Turkish authorities would seem to render indispensable; and whether, after all, it would not be better to accept the invitation of the French to unite Druse and Christian under the ægis of a common independence against the pernicious designs of those whom they have learnt to regard as their common enemy, rather than, as they ought to be, their natural protector.

Under any circumstances, I would beg you to represent these views to his Excellency Fuad Pasha in such a manner as your discretion may suggest, in order that we may ascertain how far it would be prudent to entrust him with authority over the destinies of the inhabitants of the Lebanon.

I have, &c.

(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 5 in No. 375.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, January 18, 1861.

IN some of my former despatches to your Excellency I have had occasion to allude to the state of disorder which for some time past has been prevailing in the purely Maronite district of Kesrouan.

I now have the honour of transmitting to your Excellency a paper containing certain accusations which the exiled Chiefs of the House of Khazin have preferred against the leader of the insurrection which drove them from their homes.

A perusal of this document will enable your Excellency to perceive that the disorders and the inhuman outrages of which the Lebanon has been for so many years the theatre have been exclusively confined neither to the Mixed districts nor to antagonistic races. In fact, the crimes committed by the Christian followers of Tannus Shahin, on the persons of some of the unfortunate ladies of the Khazin family, exceed anything that has ever been laid to the charge of the Druse nation. It is also, I am assured, a fact too notorious to be disputed, that the rebel leader and his adherents who still remain in undisputed possession of the lands of the exiled Sheikhs, were encouraged and countenanced in their excesses by Bishop Tobia and some of his brother ecclesiastics.

The natural inference from such a condition of affairs would lead one to consider that the so-called privileges of the Lebanon are as conducive to anarchy in the Christian portion of the Mountain as they have been to discord in the Mixed districts; and that the introduction of a strong Government is as necessary in the one quarter as the other.

With regard to Bishop Tobia, who may be considered as one of the chief causes of all the misery and bloodshed which has existed in the Lebanon, I would only say that his removal from the country is an absolute necessity. Unfortunately it will be difficult to discover any direct evidence against him. His baneful influence is perceptible in every disturbance, but his caution and cunning make it rather felt than seen. I intend eventually sounding my French colleague upon this subject; but as every day furnishes us with fresh indications of his perversity, I intend delaying this step until a favourable opportunity should occur.

If ever the exercise of arbitrary authority could be justified, it would be in the case of this unscrupulous Prelate, whose ambition and passion for intrigue verify one's conception of the worst specimen of a mediæval ecclesiastic.

I have, &c.

(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Accusations brought against Tannûs Shakhin.

ACCUSATIONS contre Tanios Chahine, de Reifoun, dans le Province de Kesrawân:—

1. Pour avoir dans le mois de Novembre 1858, adopté le titre de Sheikh Chabat (Chef des jeunes gens) et après le titre de Bey.
2. Pour s'être mis à la tête d'un mouvement révolutionnaire qui n'avait pour but que d'amener un désordre dans cette province et de produire une désorganisation gouvernementale.
3. Pour avoir excité par ses diverses discours un grand nombre des habitants des villages du Kesrawân, et pour avoir nommé parmi eux ses représentants afin de les associer dans ses méfaits et disperser les ordres. Suivent les noms de vingt-six délégués avec leurs villages. Ces personnes furent reconnues par le dit Tanios Chahine par l'application du "Chef de l'Association des jeunes gens;" plusieurs parmi eux adoptèrent le titre de Bey.
4. Pour avoir invité les suivants de son parti d'acheter des armes offensives à Beyrouth et autres parts.
5. Pour avoir commandé à ses délégués de ramasser des sommes d'argent des bourgeois paisibles afin d'acheter des armes et des munitions de guerre.
6. Pour avoir donné l'ordre à ses délégués de distribuer à ses suivants des armes et des munitions de guerre afin d'organiser leur armement complet.
7. Pour avoir en 1857, soulevé l'étendard d'une insurrection et pour s'être mis à la tête de ses suivants qu'il ordonna de s'assembler chez lui à Reifoun.
8. Pour avoir excité et intimé [*sic*] d'outrages et de chasser les Chefs Feudaux de la Province du Kesrawân.
9. Pour avoir dans le courant de la même année au mois de Janvier opéré au grand rassemblement de ses suivants, et s'être rendu avec eux à Gosta afin de massacrer la famille Khazim, qui se mettant en fuite au grand péril de la vie échappèrent au sort qui leur était destiné. Néanmoins les insurgents tirèrent sur eux des coups de fusils, dont une perça le cheval que montait Abdalla Hottar Khazin.
10. Pour avoir au mois de Juillet de la même année réuni à Azelhoun un petit nombre de ses suivants de la plus mauvaise réputation dans le but de massacrer certains personnages de la famille de Khazim qui s'y trouvèrent encore, et par conséquent ayant été l'instigateur et l'auteur de la mort de la femme de Diab Khazim et sa fille Susanne qui furent fusillées, et des blessures qui furent infligées à la tête de sa seconde fille Naufara par des coups de yataghan, aussi bien que de la destruction de la maison de Nicolas Khazim et de la mise en fuite du reste de cette famille qui se trouvèrent à Azelhoun.
11. Pour avoir ordonné qu'on n'enterre ces victimes: mais qu'on les dépouille de leurs vêtements, et après les avoir laissés dans cet état pour plusieurs jours fit traîner leurs cadavres jusqu'à une muraille qu'on fit écrouler sur eux, autant que le pillage de leurs maisons.
12. Pour avoir aggloméré et confisqué la récolte de la famille de Khazim, leurs chevaux et leurs bestiaux.
13. Pour avoir ordonné qu'on coupe les chemins et pour avoir ordonné de poursuivre dans leur retraite un grand nombre de paysans qui habitaient une autre province, soit Chrétiens ou Metualis, qu'ils ont arrêtés et dépouillés.
14. Pour avoir frappé et emprisonné plusieurs habitants paisibles qui avaient refusé de se soumettre à ses ordres d'insurrection.
15. Pour avoir envoyé de ses agents à d'autres provinces pour inviter leurs habitants à se lever aux armes contre les Chefs feudaux et le Gouvernement Local, ce qui amenera une insurrection qui fut suivie de grandes pertes pour les chefs.
16. Pour avoir annoncé par maintes lettres dispersés dans diverses provinces qu'il était le Représentant du peuple suivant la volonté des sept Puissances Européennes, et qu'il était en possession d'ordres honorifiques des dites Puissances qui testifiaient ceci.
17. Pour avoir été une des causes principales du grand mouvement d'insurrection connu au monde par le nom de l'insurrection de Kesrawân contre les

Chefs feudaux qui emmenera leur chasse de leurs terres et la confiscation de leurs biens; pour remédier laquelle le Gouvernement Turc n'a su venir en aide quoiqu'il avait le vouloir.

18. Pour avoir intimé à certains de ses suivants d'attaquer et mettre en fuite les officiers et gens du Gouvernement Turc qui étaient venus pour faire restituer certaines biens confisqués à Nekach en leur tirant des coups de fusils jusqu'ils leurs mis en fuite.*

19. Pour avoir agi d'une telle manière que quand il fut nécessaire un jour d'envoyer une force de la part de la Porte dans le Kesrouan pour calmer une guerre que les Chrétiens avaient commencé contre les Metualis, que cette force était obligée d'aller à Jebeil de crainte d'être attaqués le long de la côte comme ils l'avaient étaient auparavant.

20. Pour avoir écrit une lettre aux habitants de Jebeil dans laquelle il leur dit de ne pas reconnaître l'ordre du Gouvernement Turc et du Kaimakam donné à la force dernièrement arrivée parcequ'il possédait un "billordi" des sept Puissances, qui déclare que la liberté a été donnée aux Chrétiens et qu'ils ne sont sujets à personne et que s'ils voulaient être délivrés de l'esclavage, personne ne pouvait les empêcher, ni le Mushir ni le Kaimakam, et dans laquelle il leur dit aussi que s'ils avaient besoin d'aide il leur enverrait une quantité d'hommes, et que si par hasard le Commandant de la force envoyé par le Gouvernement avait l'audace de ne pas reconnaître l'ordre qu'il lui envoie de quitter le pays, qu'il devait lui écrire de suite afin d'amener des hommes de tout côté.

21. Pour avoir élevé le drapeau tricolore de la France pour animer ces habitants à se réunir et le suivre dans l'insurrection susdite.

(Suivent les signatures de sept Sheikhs de la famille Khazim.)

Inclosure 7 in No. 375.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrouth, January 18, 1861.

IN a previous despatch I had the honour to inform your Excellency that I regretted Fuad Pasha should afford such plausible pretexts to those whose interest it was to criticize his government for many of their complaints, and that such a circumstance could only be accounted for on the supposition that his failure in inspiring the confidence of the Christian population arose either from his incompetence to govern, from the emptiness of his treasury, or from influences of a fanatical and reactionary tendency, originating at Constantinople.

Although great intellectual ability may certainly co-exist with inaptitude for the conduct of affairs, it is difficult for any one acquainted with his Excellency to believe he is defective in the talents necessary to a practical statesman.

The effect, therefore, of what we observe, must be referred rather to the two latter causes. But although it may be admitted that a destitution of pecuniary resources will account for a great deal, there are certain symptoms in his general policy which cannot have been influenced by any such considerations.

It is, therefore, to the third and last supposition, that I am disposed to refer a great deal of what is unsatisfactory in his conduct. Indeed, I have reason to know that he receives instructions from home, conceived in a sense different from what he himself would have recommended, and that the scandalous endeavour to acquit Khoorshid Pasha and the other Turks at the expense of the lives of the thirty Druse Sheikhs has been inspired from Constantinople. If, therefore, he should seem unaccountably loth to throw himself into the arms of the European Commission; if he should use every expedient to deaden the blow which he is commissioned to strike; if the energy he displayed at Damascus should suddenly turn into an attempt to screen all Mahometan offenders; above all things, if those who know him pretty well are able to detect from time to time antagonistic influences at work within his breast, it may not be unreasonable to account for the inconsistency of his actions by supposing that he cannot decide which part to play, whether to preserve his future position at Constanti-

* *Sic in orig.*

noble by becoming the apologist and defender of the interests of the Porte, or to create for himself a career in this country, by consenting to carry out the views of Europe. Such a hesitation, impossible to an unscrupulous man, may be in some sort considered to do his Excellency credit, as it would be almost a betrayal of his Sovereign's confidence were he to disregard the illiberal admonitions he may receive from home.

The conduct of Emin Pasha at Damascus rather tends to confirm these conjectures. He is certainly endeavouring to conciliate the Moslem party; he holds language, I am told, unfavourable to Fuad Pasha. His first act, after his arrival, was to insult the American Consul, and to turn a certain Moslem, who had greatly distinguished himself by his protection of the Christians, out of the Council. He has, moreover, further astounded the inhabitants by a remark too droll to have been invented for him: "You have both," said he, "Christians and Moslems, been duly punished for your sins—let no more be said about the matter." The original expression, however, though generally interpreted as I have related, bears the notion of providential visitation as much as punishment.

Under any circumstances, it is evident that we cannot expect Fuad Pasha to act in such a way as can alone restore peace and confidence to this unhappy country, as long as his position remains so ambiguous.

The sooner, therefore, our Report can be concluded, and an understanding is arrived at with the Porte as to the future government of the country, the better.

I have spoken in this sense to M. Bécclard, and he agrees with me: unfortunately his instructions in regard to the Articles of the Memorandum will not arrive until Monday, so that nominally he is still held to the old Shehab idea; and even now there is reason to fear M. Thouvenel may not have given him the necessary liberty to agree at once to a Report devised in accordance with them.

In the meantime, if only we could effect a liberal and satisfactory settlement of the indemnity, much would be done in the way of restoring confidence; and I trust your Excellency will have compassion on our destitute condition, and induce His Imperial Majesty to repair, without delay, the losses caused by the mismanagement of his servants.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

No. 376.

Lord Dufferin to Lord J. Russell.—(Received January 31.)

(No. 60.)

My Lord,

Beyrout, January 18, 1861.

IN my last despatch No. 56 of the 13th instant, I had the honour to transmit to your Lordship a despatch from Mr. Wrench, containing a report of a predatory descent by the Druses of the Hauran into the Plain of Damascus; but I stated at the same time that this intelligence required confirmation.

I am happy now to be able to inform your Lordship that the circumstance alluded to turns out to have been a gross exaggeration, and that the rumoured pillage of Christian villages by a Druse horde is reduced to the withdrawal by their rightful owners of a certain amount of Druse property, which had been left with the Druse portion of the inhabitants of the locality in question.

In reference, however, to this incident, I may mention that everywhere of late there has been a perceptible inclination manifested by the agents of France to transmit to the Commission, and to the Government, representations tending to show that the country is in a state to require the prolongation of a foreign occupation, and it is observable that these alarming rumours generally arise at the moment a mail is at the point of starting, and too late to admit of any verification of the truth.

So striking are the pains taken to produce this effect, that I ventured the other day to take advantage of the familiarity which exists between M. Bécclard and myself to mention to him that I observed a decided intention had been arrived at by himself, by the General, and by all the agents of his Government,

that the French army should not quit the country; that I regretted this predetermination, which the circumstances of the case did not seem to me to justify; that although it could not be denied that the province was not in a satisfactory state, that the remedy evidently did not lie in foreign occupation, inasmuch as the evils complained of continued in spite of French troops being in the country, while others of a different order, though of an equally grave character, were called into existence by their presence; that 6,000 men were too small a force to act as police, which was the only pretext on which their stay would be excused, as no one pretended to anticipate there would be a renewal of the massacres; that if their army remained, it was impossible that a desire should not arise to make the country the theatre of some military exploit; that however self-possessed a General might be, no military man could be expected to look at the question from the same point of view as a Statesman; that he must eventually be acted upon by the opinions of those who surrounded him, who in their turn could only be supposed to consider the matter in its professional aspect, and to represent the thirst for distinction inherent in every army; that already the officers of the army talked openly of the necessity, in case of their stay, of an expedition to Damascus; that the consequence of such a state of things would be some military escapade, which would upset the calculations of graver men, and render the reconstruction of any Government still more difficult; that as long as the French troops were here, the Maronites would never be satisfied with any solution of the difficulty short of one which we all agreed to be impossible; that as it was, we saw the evil effects of the unhealthy stimulus thus afforded to their natural disaffection, in the endeavours of the priesthood and their associates to embarrass the Government by refusing to allow any evidence to be given against those whom they had accused; and that, at all events, it had become advisable that M. de Beaufort should withdraw his regiments to Beyrout.

M. Bécclard pleaded, in reply, that Fuad Pasha had utterly failed to restore confidence; that Christian natives and Europeans were equally desponding; that if the French were to go, the inhabitants of the Mixed districts would retire from their villages to Beyrout, and the wealthier citizens of Beyrout would flee to Alexandria; that everywhere he received unsatisfactory intelligence of what was going on, and that the presence of French soldiers was more especially beneficial in the reconstruction of the ruined villages of the Lebanon.

To this I returned, that I had always been given to understand that the Emperor intended his troops should remain, if possible, only two months in the country; that great pains had been taken to persuade the people of England of the sincerity of this intention, but that when they heard that house-roofing was to be made a pretext for a prolonged occupation, I feared that the more prejudiced and less penetrating portion of our population would consider such propositions as illusory. At the same time, I was ready to admit that among a great portion of the native Christian population considerable misgivings still existed; that Fuad Pasha had failed to restore confidence, but that this was to be accounted for by his want of money, and the malign influence by which his own liberal inclinations were counteracted from Constantinople; that it was quite natural we each should consider the question of occupation from different points of view, though he must now know me too well to suspect I was actuated by any paltry feeling of jealousy; that we both had submitted our respective views to our Governments; and that it was at home rather than here that the question must be eventually decided.

I would remark, however, in reference to this important subject, that there can be no doubt the French are determined to stay.

General de Beaufort talked to me of the "démence" of those who wished the occupation to cease, and almost all his officers hold the same language. It becomes a question, then, as to the ultimate projects they may have in view. It is impossible to believe that so violent an inclination to remain in the country should be compatible with the intention of lying inactive at Beyrout during the ensuing summer. The prospect of some feat of arms must be in contemplation. Under these circumstances it can only be the occupation of Damascus or an expedition to the Hauran.

If either of these things be attempted by the French alone there will ensue a suspension of Turkish authority all over the country. All concert between Fuad Pasha and the General will be at an end: every consideration will be

sacrificed to that of acquiring renown; and it is even possible a contingency may occur which will result in the necessity of vindicating the honour of the French flag by further reinforcements, and operations tantamount to a conquest of the country.

On the other hand it is certain, if they choose to do so, our allies can evoke such a demonstration of panic among the Christian populations of Mount Lebanon as will effectually colour all their declarations. The only method to counteract this influence would be by placing Fuad Pasha in possession of the means to indemnify the inhabitants for their late losses. Unfortunately the Porte has delayed this important operation. The Treasury is so empty that even Colonel Burnaby and M. Ferrette have been obliged to suspend their labours; and the Government is deprived of the only really potent instrument of conciliation.

Under these circumstances it becomes difficult to discover a remedy for our embarrassments. If Fuad Pasha became a free agent, if funds were placed at his disposal, if the French Government could be induced to abandon its designs not of acquiring the country (of that I think there is no danger or intention), but of making it the theatre of some military exploit, and labour with England to compose the agitation of its inhabitants, things would gradually settle down in a satisfactory manner, and Syria would acquire the blessings of peace and good government; but to leave General de Beaufort and his army untrammelled by any definite instructions, to act nominally in concert, but practically in an independent, or rather in a hostile sense to Fuad Pasha, would result in increasing instead of in remedying the general disorganization of society.

I have &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

No. 377.

Lord Dufferin to Lord J. Russell.—(Received January 31.)

(No. 61.)

My Lord,

Beyrout, January 18, 1861.

IN my despatch No. 60 of to-day's date I had the honour to state that I considered the presence of the French troops in the country very detrimental to the prestige of the Sultan's authority.

I had hardly concluded my despatch when an express from Nazareth arrived with a remarkable confirmation of the truth of this remark.

As your Lordship will remember I have already had the honour of stating that I had found myself obliged to request his Excellency Fuad Pasha to interfere on behalf of certain persecuted Protestants of Galilee; and that in consequence a man named Michael Gehan, the author of the outrage complained of, had been put in prison by his Excellency's orders.

It would now appear, from a statement I have just received from Mr. Tannûs, Interpreter to Her Britannic Majesty's Consulate at Jerusalem, who has been sent by Mr. Finn to investigate the affair, that the Latin Guardian of the Franciscan Convent, at the head of fifty or sixty men, has rescued the culprit Gehan, under pretence of enabling him to appeal to the French Commissioner at Beyrout.

I do not think a more apposite illustration could occur of the evils I have alluded to.

I have the honour to inclose to your Lordship extracts from Mr. Tannûs' despatch and from a letter addressed by Mr. Zeller to Major Fraser upon the same subject.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 377.

Mr. Tannûs to Lord Dufferin.

(Extract.)

Jerusalem, January 14, 1861.

THIS afternoon the Mudir informed me that the Guardian of the Franciscan Convent had come to the Serai with fifty or sixty men of his congregation, and

had demanded the immediate release of Michael Gehan. The Mudir alleged that he had not been able to resist their demand, as he had only a few policemen at his disposal, and as he was afraid the Latins would raise an insurrection. He affirmed, however, the Latins had taken Michael Gehan out of prison without his knowledge and consent.

Inclosure 2 in No. 377.

Mr. Zeller to Major Fraser.

(Extract.)

Nazareth, January 14, 1861.

THE conduct of the Latins, with a Franciscan monk at their head, who took Michael Gehan out of prison, in Nazareth (in spite of the order of Fuad Pasha), in the presence of Mr. Finn's agent, shows clearly that the Latins rely upon finding some strong defender of their lawless proceedings with the Turkish Government.

I hear that a monk from here, an agent of the Latin Patriarch in Jerusalem, is going with Michael Gehan to Beyrout to represent the matter to the French Commissioner.

No. 378.

Lord Dufferin to Lord J. Russell.—(Received January 31.)

(No. 62.)

My Lord,

Beyrout, January 18, 1861.

YESTERDAY my French colleague was good enough to inform me that he had received a private letter from M. Thouvenel, conveying a general approval of the Articles contained in the Memorandum I have already had the honour of transmitting to your Lordship, but that he was instructed to make certain reserves in favour of the privileges of the Lebanon.

As the preservation of anomalous privileges in the Lebanon would, I fear, be incompatible with a satisfactory settlement for the whole province, I shall do my best to induce my colleague to modify his views in this regard; and I trust Her Majesty's Government may be able to persuade M. Thouvenel to content himself with exchanging the mischievous arrangements hitherto peculiar to the Lebanon against the far more satisfactory securities for good government which are to be found in the erection of Syria into a semi-independent province, under European supervision, and that his Excellency may withdraw the recommendation it would seem he has forwarded to M. Bédard on this particular point.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

No. 379.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received January 31.)

(No. 171.)

My Lord,

Paris, January 30, 1861.

I WAS so unwell when I addressed your Lordship my despatch No. 160 of yesterday's date, that I fear I did not state with sufficient clearness the reasons which led me to submit to the consideration of Her Majesty's Government the suggestion that some latitude should be allowed me to consent to a limited prolongation of the occupation of Syria. Permit me, therefore, to add a few words of explanation now.

As I said yesterday, I have not the least doubt that, with common firmness on the part of the Porte, we can compel the faithful execution by the French Government of the Convention of the 5th of September, subject only to such impediments as the season of the year may place in the way of the embarkation of troops on an exposed coast.

Your Lordship will naturally ask why, such being my conviction, and with the knowledge I have of the importance which Her Majesty's Government attach to the departure of the French troops from Syria, I should take upon myself to suggest any delay, however short, in the complete fulfilment of the stipulations of the Convention. My answer shall be as concise as I can make it.

It seems to me that, in all political questions, the future as well as the present should be taken into consideration. Now I cannot conceal from myself, and therefore it is my duty to state it to Her Majesty's Government, that to insist upon the literal execution of the Convention of the 5th of September may have consequences very serious for the Porte, and will add to the irritation against Great Britain which, at this moment, is too evident in France.

When I say, serious consequences for the Porte, I mean that the Emperor will not forget the humiliation to which he will conceive himself to be exposed by the resolution of the Porte summarily to dispense with the further assistance of his troops. This feeling of humiliation will add to the apathy, not to say the antipathy, with which His Majesty already regards the Ottoman Empire, and will dispose him to connive at, if not to originate himself, attacks upon the authority and independence of the Sultan.

The irritation with regard to Great Britain is, if I may so express myself, a popular rather than an Imperial feeling. It arises, at this moment, from many opposite causes. It is religious, it is commercial, it is political. The position of the Pope is ascribed by the Clerical party to British counsels; the Commercial Treaty is regarded by the Protectionists as a sacrifice to British interests; the failure of the Treaty of Zurich, the departure of the French squadron from Gaeta, and other matters connected with the Italian question, are attributed to British influence. Loud, then, are the protestations against the sacrifice of the Syrian Christians to the exigencies of British Statesmen, for it is surmised that the Porte would not stir in this matter except at the instigation of Her Majesty's Government.

Her Majesty's Government may say that they cannot help the perverseness of others, and that they cannot permit their policy to be guided or controlled by the ebullition of the excitable feelings of any other nation; and I am not prepared to say that, if the interests of Great Britain alone were at stake, I should have thought it worth while to make these observations to your Lordship. But the maintenance of the integrity and independence of the Ottoman Empire has always been a point of such importance in the policy of Great Britain, that anything likely to subvert the one or the other is therefore worthy of the consideration of Her Majesty's Government.

But why, your Lordship will naturally inquire, should the Emperor desire to evade his engagements by keeping his troops in Syria beyond the time stipulated?

It is difficult to make any one who does not live in this atmosphere understand the sudden and extraordinary changes of opinion which are constantly occurring. Six weeks ago, M. Thouvenel told a confidential friend of his, that he wished he saw as clearly the termination of all other questions as he did that of Syria; that he had no anxiety whatever upon that matter, for that the Emperor was determined not to leave his troops a moment beyond the six months. What, then, has caused the present change? No doubt, the direct appeals made to the Emperor, both by the Christian inhabitants of Syria and by the Commander of the French troops, have had much to do with it. His Majesty neither likes to act in direct contravention of the advice of the latter, nor does he wish to lower his prestige with the former. At the same time, the Clerical party in France has been at work. The Emperor is represented as withdrawing from the Maronites that protection which it has been the honour of the French flag to afford to them, and his conduct in Syria is stigmatised as a worthy corollary of his conduct at Rome. Then follow the accusations of submission to British policy, and denunciations of British selfishness. One perhaps more firm of purpose than is the Emperor (in little matters) would disregard these demonstrations, but it is in his character to temporise until forced to decision.

The question then comes, When shall constraint be employed in the matter under consideration? I presume that if Her Majesty's Government could satisfy themselves that not a French soldier would remain in Syria on the 1st of May, they would prefer that quiet solution of the Syrian question to a more early evacuation—the result of a discussion which, however carefully conducted, could

hardly fail of leaving unpleasant reminiscences behind, and might be attended with other consequences to which I have adverted above; a discussion, too, in which France can count with certainty on the support of Russia and Prussia.

But how are Her Majesty's Government to be satisfied that such will be the result of their moderation? Why may not the same reasons for continued occupation be advanced two months hence as are put forward now?

In the first place, I cannot but think that such precautions may be taken, in the Conference which M. Thouvenel wishes to convoke, as must put an end to all further equivocation on the part of the French Government; in the next, it is to be supposed that by that time, with a little diligence on the part of the Commission, a legal administration will have been instituted in the Lebanon, when all excuse for further occupation will cease.

It is possible that, before the meeting of the Conference, the French Government may show themselves to be more disposed than they seem now to an immediate evacuation; and all I desire, therefore, is, that Her Majesty's Government should do me the honour to take my remarks into their serious consideration, with a view of deciding whether they will give me contingent instructions.

I need not assure your Lordship that I have no wish to aid the French Government in repudiating engagements to which I, as the Representative of Her Majesty's Government, was a contracting party. Your Lordship may trust me to enforce them at once, if it is your will that they should be enforced, as you may trust me to use with discretion any latitude which you may be pleased to give me, in consideration of the statement which I have thought it my duty thus to make.

I must not forget, in conclusion, to call your Lordship's attention to the facility with which excuses, real or imaginary, may be made of the state of the weather to account for the non-embarkation of the troops, even should the French Government be held to their positive engagements. This is, perhaps, an additional reason for consenting to some delay.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

No. 380.

Lord J. Russell to Lord Dufferin.

(No. 66.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, February 1, 1861.

SINCE I informed your Lordship of the approbation of Her Majesty's Government of your plan for the pacification of Syria, obstacles of a serious kind have arisen to prevent its final adoption. The Sultan's Ministers, looking upon it as an infringement of the sovereignty of the Porte, and the establishment of a semi-independence, have declared that Turkey will not consent to it.

M. Thouvenel, on the other hand, anxious to preserve the semi-independence of the Christian Kaimakam, as it was settled in 1842 and 1845, declares that France will consider the maintenance of those arrangements an indispensable condition of the future organization.

Both Powers wish the labours of the Commission to be confined to the Lebanon.

Such being the difficulties, and the speedy evacuation of Syria by European troops being very desirable, I have to instruct you—

1st. To preserve the Christian Kaimakamship as settled by the arrangements of 1842-45.

2ndly. To confine the plan of the Commissioners to the government of the Lebanon.

3rdly. To ask from the Porte the immediate contribution of a sum not less than 200,000*l.* for the restoration of Christian villages in the Mountain.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

Aali Pasha to M. Musurus.—(Communicated to Lord J. Russell by M. Musurus, February 2.)

M. l'Ambassadeur,

Constantinople, le 22 Janvier, 1860.

J'AI l'honneur de vous envoyer, ci-joint, les Articles qui forment la base de l'organisation future de la Syrie.

La Sublime Porte n'hésite pas à déclarer qu'avec un système de cette nature, elle sera parfaitement en état de rétablir et de maintenir l'ordre et la tranquillité dans toute la Syrie.

Nous espérons que cette résolution, qui ne tardera pas à recevoir son exécution, rencontrera l'approbation unanime de toutes les Puissances.

Je n'ai pas besoin d'ajouter que la responsabilité d'accomplir une tâche si difficile ne peut s'assumer que par une liberté d'action proportionnée à la grandeur du devoir. Cet important point sera, nous n'en doutons pas, apprécié avec bienveillance et équité par les grands Cabinets, qui ne cherchent que la solution satisfaisante de cette malheureuse question.

En communiquant à M. le Ministre des Affaires Etrangères de Sa Majesté Britannique la décision dont il s'agit, vous voudrez bien assurer son Excellence que la Sublime Porte, pénétrée de la gravité des obligations qui lui incombent, et intéressée au suprême degré à voir la tranquillité régner dans une partie si importante de l'Empire, négligera rien pour établir sur des bases solides et durables le système qu'elle vient d'adopter.

Vous êtes autorisé, M. l'Ambassadeur, à remettre copie de cette dépêche, ainsi que de son annexe, si M. le Ministre vous en témoigne le désir.

Je vous prie, &c.

(Signé) AALI.

Inclosure in No. 381.

Articles containing the Bases for the future Government of Syria.

(Traduction.)

1. L'EFFECTIF de l'armée Impériale d'Arabie sera porté au maximum réglementaire, c'est-à-dire, au chiffre de vingt-six mille hommes, et y sera maintenu.

2. Les revenus, autres que ceux des douanes des provinces comprises dans la circonscription de la dite armée, seront affectés à son entretien; dans le cas où ces revenus ne seraient pas suffisants, on aurait recours aux revenus de même nature des autres provinces.

3. Le mode de compléter l'effectif de la dite armée, et le choix de conscrits destinés à cet effet, seront l'objet d'une discussion à part.

4. Un corps mobile de cavalerie, chargé d'empêcher les tribus nomades de dévaster le pays, sera organisé sur le pied de troupes régulières.

5. Le Commandant-en-chef de la dite armée, qui aura aussi le commandement du dit Corps Mobile, sera chargé du maintien de la sécurité publique dans toute la circonscription de l'armée, et en aura la responsabilité.

6. Les agents de la Police des villes et des bourgs seront également sous la juridiction du Muezzin de l'armée, mais employés sous les ordres des Gouverneurs-Généraux. Ces agents seront recrutés des Musulmans et des Chrétiens indistinctement.

7. Les provinces de Damas et de Sayda seront gouvernées chacune séparément par un Gouverneur-Général d'un caractère éprouvé et capable.

8. Il sera formé dans chacune de ces deux provinces un Grand Conseil Mixte composé de membres appartenant aux différentes communautés existantes, et ayant des attributions clairement définies.

9. Dans chacune de ces deux provinces il sera également formée une Cour Criminelle Mixte, et composée de membres capables et compétents.

10. Les Conseils des Sandjaks seront assimilés à ceux des provinces quant à leur forme et à leur organisation.

11. Chaque année, à une époque déterminée et fixe, on choisirait dans tous

les Sandjaks de la province une personne parmi les Musulmans et une de chaque différente communauté Chrétienne et Juive, tous sujets de Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan, lesquels seront envoyés au chef-lieu de la province. Là ils devront être réunis au Grand Conseil de la province, qui formera, sous la présidence du Gouverneur-Général, un Conseil-Général dont chacun des membres aura à exposer et à étudier les besoins du pays par rapport à l'agriculture, au commerce, aux mesures de sûreté publique, et à l'assiette des impôts, soit dans l'intérêt particulier de ses commettants, soit dans l'intérêt général de la province. La durée de ce Conseil ne devra pas dépasser le terme de deux mois. Ceux des habitants d'un Sandjak appartenant à une communauté quelconque, et dont le nombre n'atteindra pas le chiffre de mille âmes, n'auront pas le droit d'envoyer de Délégué au dit Conseil.

12. Les procès-verbaux des délibérations des Conseils-Généraux seront immédiatement transmis à la Sublime Porte, qui, après un examen préalable, ordonnera la mise à exécution des mesures y indiquées.

13. Chaque année à l'époque de la réunion des Conseils-Généraux indiqués dans l'Article précédent, un haut dignitaire de la Sublime Porte sera envoyé en Syrie comme Inspecteur-Général.

14. Le Commandant-Général de la force armée sera autorisé à prendre d'urgence, et d'accord avec le Gouverneur Civil, toutes les mesures militaires que le maintien de l'ordre et la sécurité des habitants exigeraient.

15. Son Excellence Fuad Pacha restera provisoirement jusqu'à l'établissement de ces Conseils et à la mise à exécution des mesures ci-dessus énoncées.

No. 382.

Memorandum of the Negotiations between Her Majesty's Government and the French Government upon the subject of sending an Armed Expedition to Syria.

ON the 5th July, 1860, Lord Cowley received a note from M. Thouvenel, urgently requesting to see him in consequence of news he had received of the massacre of the Christian populations in Syria. Earl Cowley,
No. 839, July 5,
1860.

On Lord Cowley calling upon M. Thouvenel, the latter having communicated the various reports which he had received from Syria, varying in date from the 16th to the 21st of June, 1860, expatiated at great length, and with much warmth upon the evident inability of the Turkish authorities to maintain order in Syria, the impossibility of leaving matters in their present state, and urged that the arrangements of 1845 ought not to remain a dead letter, but authorised the interference of Europe. Earl Cowley,
No. 839, July 5,
1860.

M. Thouvenel suggested that a Commission from the Five Powers should be sent into the disturbed districts, and if it were found that the Porte was unable to furnish the force necessary to restore order, might not the Sultan be invited to ask for troops from the Viceroy of Egypt?

Lord Cowley expressed doubts as to Her Majesty's Government approving this notion, although he was convinced that they would be most ready to join with the Imperial Government in taking measures to insure an efficient protection of the Christian inhabitants of the Lebanon, and a better administration of the Government of Syria. He trusted that the reinforcements which had been sent from Constantinople would be found sufficient to restore order and tranquillity.

On the receipt of the above news from Lord Cowley, Her Majesty's Government declared that they would press on the Porte to exert their utmost efforts in relation to Syria, but not to ask the assistance of the Viceroy of Egypt, who was aiming at independence. Her Majesty's Government would direct a squadron to be sent to the coast of Syria for the protection of the lives and property of British subjects. Instructions accordingly were sent to the Admiralty, July 6. Lord J. Russell,
No. 672, July 6,
1860.

About the 15th of July, M. Thouvenel transmitted a despatch to the Courts of the Great Powers, proposing that a Mixed Commission should be sent into the Lebanon with the object of restoring tranquillity, inquiring into the origin of the late massacre, and of punishing the authors of it. Lord J. Russell,
No. 678, July 10,
1860.

In consequence, however, of further disastrous news received by the French

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Earl Cowley,
No. 916, Confiden-
tial, July 17, 1860.

Earl Cowley,
No. 916, Confidential,
July 17, 1860.

Government from Damascus, both the Emperor and M. Thouvenel declared that the state of affairs in Syria required a more active intervention on the part of Europe. In answer to a question from Lord Cowley, M. Thouvenel stated that he would propose no plan, as in the actual state of affairs in Europe any proposition coming from France would be suspected, but he intimated the opinion that foreign troops might be sent to Syria and disembarked at different points along the coast of the disturbed districts.

Lord J. Russell,
No. 706, July 17,
1860.

On the 17th of July Her Majesty's Government instructed Sir Henry Bulwer by telegraph to support the proposal about to be made to the Porte by the French Government of a Commission to be sent to the Lebanon.

Lord J. Russell,
No. 710, July 19,
1860.

On the 18th of July Her Majesty's Government informed Lord Cowley that they would not object to the landing of French or Austrian troops in Syria, if necessary, according to the terms of a Convention to be agreed upon between the Porte and the Allied Powers.

Earl Cowley,
No. 927, July 19,
1860.

On receiving this intelligence M. Thouvenel addressed a telegram simultaneously to the Governments of Austria, Russia, Prussia, and the Porte, mentioning the communications which had passed between Paris and London, and asking the assent of those Governments to the conclusion of a Convention by the respective Representatives at Constantinople.

Should the answer returned prove favourable, a corps of French troops would be immediately embarked and directed on Syria.

Earl Cowley,
No. 927, July 19,
1860.

A Draft of Convention had also been prepared by M. Thouvenel; the preamble declaring the intention of the Sultan to put an end to the disorders in Syria, and the readiness of the Great Powers to co-operate with him; the Articles providing for the sending of an European force (which M. Thouvenel conceived should consist of 10,000 men), the understanding between the Commander of that force and the Commander of the Turkish forces in Syria, &c. &c.

The exact objects of the expedition, and the period when it should be withdrawn, to be left to a further understanding between the Porte and the Powers parties to the Convention.

Lord J. Russell,
No. 720, July 23,
1860.

Her Majesty's Government having received from Count Persigny, on July 22, a project of the proposed Convention alluded to above, informed Lord Cowley that although the exceptional circumstances which had occurred might justify the proposed expedition, yet if the news of the next ten days or fortnight should justify the hope that the massacres had stopped and would not be renewed, the expedition should not be sent.

Her Majesty's Government also considered that a final term should be inserted in the Convention for the evacuation of Syria by foreign troops, and that six months might be fixed for the occupation.

Her Majesty's Government declared that they sanctioned the expedition to Syria with great reluctance, as it was a measure which might lead to international difficulties of a grave character. That on those accounts it was desirable that the intervention should only be undertaken when the necessity was clearly proved, and that it should cease as soon as that necessity should no longer exist.

Earl Cowley,
No. 946, July 23,
1860.

On the 23rd of July, M. Thouvenel informed Lord Cowley that he had learnt through M. de Persigny that Her Majesty's Government showed great disinclination to agree any longer to the expedition of a French force to Syria, and generally disapproved of the proposed Convention. M. Thouvenel added that these views of Her Majesty's Government had given the Emperor great pain, as they proved too plainly the suspicions which Her Majesty's Government entertained of the dealings of France. M. Thouvenel also declared that should even the massacres have ceased, which he did not believe, and peace have been concluded, he could not agree with Her Majesty's Government that this should render all further intervention unnecessary, and that he was convinced that order would not be permanently established or justice done except under the pressure of a foreign force. France, he added, would be perfectly justified in asking and enforcing reparation for the plunder of the French Consul's house at Damascus, and for the sack of the Latin convents in the Lebanon which had been since the time of St. Louis under the protection of France. M. Thouvenel said further that France had no wish to act single-handed; but he could not conceive it possible that Her Majesty's Government would advocate a policy of abstention ("une politique d'abstention") in the face of such grave events.

On the 24th of July, Lord Cowley informed Her Majesty's Government

that the French Government had received news from Damascus up to the 12th instant, and that the massacres continued. M. Thouvenel had summoned a meeting of the Representatives of the Porte and the Five Powers for the following day to consider the Articles of the proposed Convention with a view of sending troops immediately.

Earl Cowley,
No. 957, July 24,
1860.

From a conversation Lord Cowley had with M. Thouvenel on the 24th of July, he did not think that the latter would refuse to insert a clause in the Convention limiting the number of troops to be employed, and fixing the period of occupation.

Earl Cowley,
No. 958, July 24,
1860.

The answers which M. Thouvenel received at this time from Vienna and Berlin to his proposal of sending troops to Syria were both affirmative of the project, and calculated to encourage the French in their projected armed intervention in Syria.

Earl Cowley,
No. 963, July 25,
1860.

On the 25th July M. Thouvenel informed Lord Cowley that the amount of force the Emperor proposed sending to Syria was 6,800 men, and that His Majesty thought the expedition would have achieved its object in a couple of months' time.

Earl Cowley,
No. 965, July 25,
1860.

On the 25th July Her Majesty's Government instructed Lord Cowley to attend the Conference convoked by M. Thouvenel on the 26th July, and to adhere strictly to the following conditions:—

Lord J. Russell,
No. 739, July 26,
1860.

1. That Fuad Pacha should ask for intervention.
2. The Convention between the Porte and the Five Powers to be signed as soon as possible.
3. A term not exceeding six months to be fixed for occupation by foreign troops.

Lord J. Russell,
No. 740, July 26,
1860.

To ask, besides, for a Protocol similar to that of 1840.

At the first Conference, held at the French Foreign Office on the 26th of July, M. Thouvenel communicated his Project of Convention, which, he said, he was desirous should be concluded between the Powers and the Porte, and which would permit of the employment of European troops to aid in restoring tranquillity in Syria.

Earl Cowley,
No. 979, July 26,
1860.

A discussion of little importance ensued, and the Conference ended by a copy of the Project of Convention being furnished to each Plenipotentiary for their examination, and submission to their respective Governments.

On Lord Cowley's informing M. Thouvenel that Her Majesty's Government thought it advisable that a Protocol should be signed by the Great Powers, analogous in sense to that signed on the 17th of September, 1840, M. Thouvenel at once adopted the idea, and on the 26th of July gave Lord Cowley a Project of Protocol, based upon the views of Her Majesty's Government, and in which he also recorded the declaration wished for by Her Majesty's Government, that the occupation of Syria by European troops should cease after the lapse of six months.

Earl Cowley,
No. 981, Confidential,
July 26, 1860.

Her Majesty's Government having had M. Thouvenel's Project of Convention under their consideration, informed Lord Cowley on the 28th of July of their views upon the subject, and of the amendments they wished introduced.

Lord J. Russell,
No. 747, July 28,
1860.

The main points appeared to Her Majesty's Government to be, the necessity of obtaining the assent of the Porte, explicitly given, to the intervention of foreign troops in one of the Provinces of the Sultan, and the equal necessity of a term (six months) being fixed, at the end of which such foreign intervention should cease. These provisions, to which every publicity should be given, being necessary for the justification of Her Majesty's Government in the eyes of the English nation.

The amendments proposed by Her Majesty's Government had for their object to preserve the authority of the Sultan, and to keep future stipulations for future contingencies.

At a second Conference held on the 30th of July an amended Project of Convention was adopted by the Plenipotentiaries. Lord Cowley refused, however, to affix his initials to the Project until it should have received the sanction of Her Majesty's Government.

Earl Cowley,
No. 1,002, July 30,
1860.

During the second Conference M. Thouvenel observed that, should it be found necessary to augment the army of occupation, he hoped that the other Powers would be found ready to furnish their contingents, as he was most anxious that the expedition should not be viewed in the light of a French

Earl Cowley,
No. 1,003, July 31,
1860.

Earl Cowley,
No. 1,003, July 31,
1860.

expedition, but that it should be considered that the French Government was, as it were, delegated by Europe to undertake it in the first instance.

M. Thouvenel also took occasion to say, that although, in the opinion of the Imperial Government, six months would more than suffice for the restoration of tranquillity in Syria, and that the troops of occupation might well be brought away within that time, yet that circumstances might arise over which the French Government could have no control, such as illness among the troops, or continued bad weather on a very exposed coast, which might physically prevent the fulfilment of Article V. Unforeseen events even might occur to render a prolongation of the occupation necessary.

In answer to which Lord Cowley observed that, with regard to the first two contingencies, nobody could be expected to do that which was impossible; and that with respect to the third, there was always the possibility of summoning a fresh Conference.

Earl Cowley,
No. 1,010,
August 1, 1860.

On the 1st of August M. Thouvenel informed Lord Cowley that, in consequence of accounts received of fresh massacres in Syria, and of an application made by Fuad Pasha for reinforcements and money, he was most anxious for the departure of the expedition.

To facilitate which M. Thouvenel intended to propose to Her Majesty's Government the signature of a Protocol instead of the Convention, the Plenipotentiaries not having yet received their respective full powers.

Earl Cowley,
No. 1,032,
August 3, 1860.

Lord Cowley advised the adoption of this course, and, in accordance with these views, two Protocols were signed on the 3rd of August, at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, by the Representatives of Great Britain, Austria, France, Prussia, Russia, and Turkey; the one sanctioning the French expedition to Syria, the other disclaiming all interested motive on the part of the allies of the Porte in undertaking the expedition.

Lord J. Russell,
No. 769,
August 4, 1860.

Her Majesty's Government entirely approved Lord Cowley's conduct during the Conferences on the affairs of Syria.

Earl Cowley,
No. 1,042,
August 6, 1860.

The first French troops destined for Syria left Marseilles by the mail steamer on the 6th of August. With an average passage of six days they would have arrived at their destination about the 12th of August. During a conversation with Lord Cowley on the 7th of August M. Thouvenel informed his Excellency that the Emperor's last words to General Beaufort on his departure for Syria were, that he should be much disappointed if the expedition were not back in France within three months, and on this occasion M. Thouvenel responded to an observation made by Lord Cowley, namely, that the institution of the Commission to be sent to Syria would facilitate the return of the expedition, for that as soon as tranquillity should have been restored, and the moral effect which the French Government hoped from the presence of European troops in Syria have been obtained, there would be a fair and valid reason for withdrawing the troops and leaving further proceedings in the hands of the Commissioners.

Earl Cowley,
No. 1,049,
August 7, 1860.

M. Thouvenel said that such was also his opinion. He considered that the Commission would be a great assistance to the French Government to cover the withdrawal of their troops, for that he looked to no other than a moral effect as a safeguard for the future from the presence of the expedition which had been sent.

Earl Cowley,
No. 1,172,
September 5, 1860.

The Convention sanctioning and regulating the French expedition to Syria was signed September 5, 1860.

No. 383.

Lord J. Russell to Sir H. Bulwer.

(No. 69.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, February 2, 1861.

I HAVE informed Lord Dufferin that in consequence of the objections made by the Porte and by France to the adoption of his Lordship's plan for settling Syria, and in order to expedite the withdrawal of European troops from that country, he is first to preserve the Christian Kaimakamship as settled by the arrangements of 1842-45; secondly, to confine the plan of the Commissioners to the government of the Lebanon; and thirdly, to ask from the Porte the

immediate contribution of a sum not less 200,000*l.* for the restoration of Christian villages in the Mountain.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 384.

Mr. Fane to Lord J. Russell.—(Received February 4.)

(No. 73.)

My Lord,

Vienna, January 29, 1861.

THE French Ambassador submitted to Count Rechberg on Friday last a communication on the part of his Government, suggesting the expediency of calling a meeting of the Conference at Paris to take into further consideration the affairs of Syria.

I saw Count Rechberg the same day and learnt from his Excellency that he had told M. de Moustier that he would submit to the Emperor the proposal of the French Government, but that he might at once state that the Imperial Cabinet would act with regard to the suggested meeting of the Conference on the principle which they had laid down on the occasion of the Conference being convened to deliberate on the affairs of Syria in the autumn, namely, that they could support no proposal respecting the occupation of that province by foreign troops, which was not sanctioned by the Government of the Sultan.

Count Rechberg further observed that a Conference for considering the expediency of prolonging the foreign occupation of Syria could not be held if the Porte should refuse to take part in it, since the other Powers could not convene to deliberate upon a question on which no valid decision could be taken without the concurrence of the Ottoman Government.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JULIAN FANE.

No. 385.

Mr. Lowther to Lord J. Russell.—(Received February 4.)

(No. 60.)

My Lord,

Berlin, February 2, 1861.

IN obedience to your Lordship's instructions contained in your Lordship's despatch No. 28, I read to Baron Schleinitz yesterday Mr. Fane's despatch No. 63 of the 12th ultimo, reporting the manner in which Count Rechberg had received the communication of your Lordship's despatch to Mr. Fane No. 34 of the 16th ultimo on the affairs of Syria. Baron Schleinitz made no remarks on this despatch beyond stating, when I had finished, what he had already said on a former occasion, that if one of the parties to the Convention by which the troops had at first been sent to Syria, objected to their stay there, now that the time stipulated for that stay had expired, the evacuation should take place.

He said the Government of the Sultan was taking on itself a very great responsibility, but I replied, "You see that on all sides they assert the presence of the troops is an impediment to them."

His Excellency asked me if I was aware what answer your Lordship had made to M. Thouvenel's communication relative to summoning a Conference of the Representatives of the Powers on the affairs of Syria. I replied in the words of your Lordship's despatch No. 108 to Lord Cowley, that I believed Her Majesty's Government were quite prepared, either in Conference or otherwise, to inquire of the Sultan's Ministers whether the Porte was ready to become responsible for the present tranquillity of Syria, and had provided sufficient means for that purpose.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. LOWTHER.

Lord J. Russell to Earl Cowley.

(No. 143.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, February 4, 1861.

I INCLOSE a copy of a despatch from Mr. Fane,* stating that Count Rechberg had answered an application of the French Government respecting a meeting of a Conference on the affairs of Syria by declaring explicitly that the Imperial Government would support no proposal respecting the occupation of that province by foreign troops which was not sanctioned by the Government of the Sultan.

The Turkish Ambassador at Her Majesty's Court has informed me that the Turkish Government will not object to go into a Conference if it is desired by the Powers of Europe, but that Turkey will not consent to a renewal of the Convention of the 5th of September.

As Her Majesty's Government entirely agree with that of Austria on the subject of the occupation of Syria, it is worth while for M. Thouvenel to reflect whether any advantage is to be obtained by summoning the Conference. Her Majesty's Government will not object to direct your Excellency to attend the Conference, if all other Powers agree to it; but they cannot consent to any renewal of the Convention of the 5th of September, unless the proposal has the entire and willing assent of the Sublime Porte.

I am, &c.

(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 387.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received February 5.)

(No. 189.)

My Lord,

Paris, February 4, 1861.

BEFORE receiving yesterday your Lordship's Separate despatch of the 27th ultimo I had, in compliance with the instructions contained in your Lordship's telegram of the same date, communicated to Prince Metternich your despatch No. 108 of the 24th ultimo, respecting the continued military occupation of Syria, and I professed my readiness to concert with his Excellency the conduct which we should pursue in the event of a Conference being assembled.

The Prince said that he was without any instructions upon the subject from his Government; that he did not know in what way the invitation of France to re-assemble the Conference had been received by Count Rechberg; but he added that M. Thouvenel had told him, on the authority of M. de Moustier, that Count Rechberg was of opinion that the occupation should be continued. He had informed Count Rechberg of this by telegraph, and solicited instructions as to the language which he was to hold.

I expressed surprise at this statement, observing that M. de Moustier must have been mistaken, inasmuch as Mr. Fane had communicated to Count Rechberg the views of Her Majesty's Government, with regard to the evacuation of Syria, as far back as the middle of January, and Count Rechberg had stated to Mr. Fane that he shared those views. What they were the Prince could best understand by a perusal of your Lordship's despatch embodying them. I then gave him to read your Lordship's despatch No. 14 of the 16th ultimo to Mr. Fane, and Mr. Fane's reply No. 63 of the 24th ultimo.

I cannot, for the moment, carry into effect your Lordship's instructions to communicate with the Turkish Ambassador, as Vefyk Effendi, although still in Paris, has taken leave of the Emperor and M. Thouvenel, and has placed the affairs of the Embassy in the hands of the Chargé d'Affaires, who is an old hanger-on and a complete dependent on the French Government.

I have, &c.

(Signed) COWLEY.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received February 5.)

(No. 190. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Paris, February 4, 1861.

IN the conversation which I have had with Prince Metternich on the affairs of Syria, and which is alluded to in my preceding despatch, the Prince did not disguise his own opinion that it would be impolitic to insist on the immediate withdrawal of the French troops from Syria.

His Excellency's objections seemed based on the desirableness of not giving umbrage to France, and he said that he thought some middle course might be taken in the first instance, such as requiring the concentration of the French troops on the coast, with the understanding that if tranquillity continue to prevail in the interior they should be shortly re-embarked for France.

I remarked that nothing would be easier than for French Agents to excite fresh disturbances, and that it would be unwise to connect the stay of the troops with any such contingency. The Turks, I said, were the proper preservers of order within the Sultan's dominions, and I had no doubt, after the lesson which had been administered to them, that they would take care that order should be maintained.

Prince Metternich, without disputing this principle, or the obligation imposed upon France to withdraw, should the Porte insist upon it, seemed to doubt the prudence of the Porte taking so strong a step.

I have, &c.

(Signed) COWLEY.

No. 389.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received February 5.)

(No. 193.)

My Lord,

Paris, February 4, 1861.

WHEN I saw M. Thouvenel the day before yesterday, I inquired of his Excellency whether he had received any answer from Constantinople to his proposal of reassembling the Conference on Syrian affairs; his Excellency replied in the negative.

He then alluded to the Circular of the Porte of the 22nd ultimo, inclosing a project for the future government of Syria. His Excellency observed, that as he had only just received it, he should reserve his opinion upon it; but he remarked that no mention whatever was made of the government of the Lebanon. He said, further, that the notion of keeping an army of 26,000 men in Syria was simply preposterous, and that the Porte knew it could never be realised, nor indeed did he consider so large a force to be necessary.

With respect to the government of the Lebanon, I said that it was to be regretted that the Porte should not have explained itself; though from a communication which had been made to Her Majesty's Government, there seemed to be no doubt that the arrangements of 1842 and 1845 were to be maintained, at all events until some other project, if there was any in contemplation, should have received the assent of the European Commission sitting at Beyrout; and, indeed, an earnest of this was to be found in the nomination which had already taken place of a Christian Kaimakam.

M. Thouvenel replied, that he did not intend to cast doubts on the intentions of the Porte, but to express regret that they should not have been communicated loyally.

I have, &c.

(Signed) COWLEY.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received February 6.)

(No. 198.)

My Lord,

Paris, February 5, 1861.

M. THOUVENEL informs me that the Porte has consented to the reassembling of the Conference on Syrian affairs, and that Vefyk Effendi will be desired to remain in Paris to represent Turkey on this occasion. Instructions for the regulation of his conduct are to be sent to him forthwith.

I will endeavour to see Vefyk Effendi without loss of time, but I fear that it will be difficult, in presence of the consent of the Porte, and of the statement about to be made to the Legislative Bodies, to which reference is made in my preceding despatch, to induce M. Thouvenel to desist from convoking the Conference, as is suggested in your Lordship's despatch No. 143 of yesterday's date.

Indeed, I venture to think that it is better that the Conference should meet. My experience of the Porte always leads me to apprehend that, left to deal alone with any other Power, her resistance to that Power will be nil; and I should not be the least surprised to find, in the event of the Conference not assembling, some direct arrangement arrived at between France and the Porte for the prolongation of the occupation of Syria. On the other hand, should the Turkish Government resolutely hold out, the concentrated ire of France will fall upon the Porte. Her Majesty's Government may, however, deem these to be lesser evils than the possibility of the renewal of the Convention of the 5th of September for a limited period, which will certainly be put forward by others, and may eventually be conceded by the Porte in Conference. But I am more disposed to think that a little conciliatory firmness on the part of the Porte's Representative, backed by the authority of the Representatives of Great Britain and Austria, will insure the early departure of the French troops from Syria. It is, however, essential that the Turkish Representative should be in a position to make some positive declaration with regard to the future government of the Mountain, and that that declaration should confirm all the rights and privileges heretofore enjoyed by the Christians.

Another advantage in a Conference is, that whatever opinions may be given by the different Representatives on the advisableness of prolonging the occupation, the right of the Porte to insist on its cessation must be recognised by all.

On the whole, then, whether I look to the object which Her Majesty's Government have in view, the evacuation of Syria, or to effecting that object in the way least likely to compromise the future relations of the Porte with France, I lean towards a discussion in Conference.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

Lord J. Russell to Earl Cowley.

(No. 158.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, February 6, 1861.

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 198 of the 5th instant, stating that M. Thouvenel had informed you that the Porte has consented to the re-assembling of the Conference on Syrian affairs, and that instructions for his conduct will forthwith be sent to Vefyk Effendi, who will represent Turkey in the Conference.

I have to acquaint your Excellency that, on their part, Her Majesty's Government have no objection to the meeting of the Conference, and you will state to M. Thouvenel that you are authorized to attend it on the part of Her Majesty.

Your Excellency is so fully acquainted with the views of Her Majesty's Government in regard to the affairs of Syria, and more particularly as to the

reasons alleged for the meeting of the Conference at the present time, that I have no special instructions to give to you for your guidance, except that it is the wish of Her Majesty's Government that you should endeavour to act in concert with the Ambassadors of Austria and of the Porte; and that you should not agree to anything which binds the Porte, unless it should be clearly shown that the course proposed has the sanction and consent of the Sultan.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

Lord Dufferin to Lord J. Russell.—(Received February 8.)

(No. 63.)

My Lord,

Beyrout, January 27, 1861.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Lordship's information, copies of further despatches which I have this day addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at the Porte.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 392.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, January 24, 1861.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Excellency's information, copy of the Protocol of the seventeenth sitting of the Syrian Commission, held on the 31st December last.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 2 in No. 392.

Protocol of the Seventeenth Meeting of the Syrian Commission, held at Beyrout, December 31, 1860.

LE Lundi, trente-un Décembre, mil huit cent soixante, tous les Commissaires étant réunis à Beyrout, sous la présidence de Fuad Pacha, la séance est ouverte à deux heures et demie.

Une conversation s'engage entre MM. les Commissaires sur les questions qui ont déjà été examinées dans la précédente séance à laquelle son Excellence Fuad Pacha avait été empêché d'assister par suite du mauvais état de sa santé. Son rétablissement va lui permettre de se rendre immédiatement à Moktara, où les Druses qui viennent d'être arrêtés seront jugés. Son Excellence a fait procéder à de nombreuses arrestations non seulement parmi les Druses, mais aussi parmi les Musulmans Sunnites et les Métualis. On a relâché tous ceux qui n'étaient pas compris dans les listes de dénonciations fournies, pour les notables Chrétiens, et cette mesure, tout en rétablissant la confiance et en empêchant qu'une sorte de panique ne se répandit dans le pays, aura encore l'avantage de faciliter d'autres arrestations. La Commission sait comment ces listes ont été dressées, et quel nombre de dénonciations elles contiennent. Son Excellence entre dans de nouveaux détails à cet égard, et confirme ceux qui ont déjà été données par Abro Efendi dans la précédente séance. Une première liste générale, contenant 4,600 noms, avait été dressée. Fuad Pacha, eu égard au système de pénalité qu'il a résolu d'adopter, conformément au vœu de la

Commission, a cru devoir demander aux Evêques une liste des principaux coupables. Les Evêques ont alors dressé trois listes d'accusations, graduées selon le degré apparent de la culpabilité. La première de ces listes contient encore 1,200 noms d'individus accusés comme organisateurs, chefs de bandes, ou assassins sanguinaires; Fuad Pacha cherchera parmi ceux-là les plus grands coupables qui, aux termes de l'arrangement intervenu entre la Commission et le Plénipotentiaire Ottoman, sont tous également passibles de la peine de mort. Avant de procéder aux exécutions, Fuad Pacha exprime l'intention où il est de communiquer à la Commission la liste des condamnés et le texte des sentences.

M. le Commissaire Britannique fait part à ses collègues des renseignements qui lui ont été fournis récemment, et d'après lesquels une centaine de Druses environ auraient été assassinés par des Chrétiens depuis l'apaisement de la guerre civile. Cette circonstance, selon Lord Dufferin, mériterait d'être prise en considération pour déterminer le chiffre de ceux d'entre les Druses qui devront subir la peine capitale.

M. Novikow fait observer que ce sont là des assassinats isolés, commis d'individus à individus, et qu'il y en a eu du même genre commis par les Druses contre les Chrétiens. Fuad Pacha répond qu'il y a eu aussi des réclamations de la part des Chrétiens au sujet d'assassinats isolés commis par les Druses; mais on ne sait pas si ces assassinats ont été commis pendant ou après les événements de la Montagne.

M. le Commissaire Prussien rappelle à cet égard qu'il a présenté, il y a deux mois, à Fuad Pacha une liste d'une trentaine d'assassinats, commis par des Druses contre des Chrétiens. M. Bécclard s'engage à donner également le nom des Chrétiens qui ont été victimes d'assassinats isolés depuis l'arrivée du Commissaire de la Sublime Porte en Syrie. Il saisit cette occasion pour demander à Fuad Pacha quand et comment il compte procéder à la mesure du désarmement, et M. de Weckbecker remarquant que l'esprit de vendetta règne dans tous les pays de Montagne et qu'en général là où la justice est lente et le sang bouillant, les particuliers sont naturellement portés à se faire justice eux-mêmes, M. Bécclard insiste sur la nécessité de combattre cette tendance naturelle par une justice prompte et par le désarmement. Il cite à cet égard l'exemple de la Corse où, par l'intervention active du pouvoir judiciaire et un désarmement rigoureux, le Gouvernement Français est arrivé à changer presque complètement les habitudes de la population.

Fuad Pacha répond qu'en Syrie la mesure du désarmement général dépend de la réorganisation que le Gouvernement Impérial veut introduire dans tout l'Empire. Cette mesure suppose, indépendamment d'une force armée régulière, l'institution d'une bonne gendarmerie, la suppression du corps des Bachi-Bozouks, et la création de lignes d'observation sur les confins du désert, car on ne peut désarmer un groupe de population sans désarmer les populations voisines, ni désarmer celles-ci en les laissant exposées aux brigandages des tribus errantes. Il y a là un enchaînement qui rend l'exécution de la mesure très difficile. Dans certaines contrées de la Palestine le laboureur conduit sa charrue le fusil sur l'épaule. Comment désarmer cet homme sans lui offrir en compensation la garantie d'une police bien faite et d'un pouvoir public bien organisé? Il en est de même dans toute la Syrie.

L'attention de MM. les Commissaires se porte ensuite sur la situation des familles Chrétiennes restées à Damas et alimentées provisoirement par les secours de l'autorité. Lord Dufferin signale de regrettables irrégularités dans la distribution de ces secours, irrégularités dont Fuad Pacha croit devoir faire retomber la responsabilité sur les Comités Chrétiens chargés de la distribution. Son Excellence déclare qu'elle avait déjà recommandé au nouveau Gouverneur de Damas, Emin Pacha, un contrôle aussi sévère que possible des opérations confiées à ces Comités.

M. Bécclard présente une liste de onze Musulmans qui se sont noblement conduits pendant les événements, et qui mériteraient d'être récompensés par le Sultan. Cette liste est appuyée par tous les autres Commissaires, qui se réservent toutefois de signaler à Fuad Pacha, s'il y a lieu, les noms d'autres personnes qui se seraient également distinguées. M. le Commissaire Français croit devoir appeler au contraire les rigueurs trop lentes du Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Impériale sur des individus dont la participation à ces mêmes événements est évidente, et qui sont jusqu'à ce jour restés impunis, notamment tous

les Mouktars, ou chefs de quartiers, qui sont demeurés en fonctions et qui ont fait une fortune scandaleuse, en exploitant les Musulmans contre lesquels ils devaient sévir.

Son Excellence Fuad Pacha promet d'avoir égard à cette double recommandation, appuyée unanimement par tous les membres de la Commission.

M. le Commissaire Français renouvelle l'interpellation qu'il a adressée dans la dernière séance à Fuad Pacha par l'intermédiaire d'Abro Efendi, relativement aux sentences rendues par le Tribunal Extraordinaire de Beyrouth contre les officiers Ottomans et les Cheiks Druses. M. Bécclard s'attache à bien préciser l'objet de cette interpellation. En ce qui concerne la repression des coupables, le rôle de la Commission et celui du Plénipotentiaire Ottoman ne pourraient être confondus. La Commission doit provoquer le châtiment des coupables, et si le tribunal propose d'appliquer des peines de second ordre à des hommes dont la culpabilité et la haute responsabilité sont reconnues en principe par la Commission, ce n'est pas à la Commission qu'il appartient de rechercher elle-même qu'elles sont les circonstances atténuantes qui ont été prises en considération; c'est au Commissaire Ottoman qu'incombe le soin de les faire connaître. Le texte des sentences ne renferme point à cet égard d'éclaircissements suffisants. Il n'y est fait mention d'aucun fait qui vienne diminuer la responsabilité des officiers Ottomans; elle demeure donc pleine et entière aux yeux de la Commission, qui jusqu'à ce que les preuves à décharge lui soient fournies, se trouve dans l'impossibilité d'exprimer, relativement aux sentences qui lui ont été communiquées, l'avis que Fuad Pacha a bien voulu solliciter de sa part.

Son Excellence le Plénipotentiaire Ottoman répond que le Tribunal Extraordinaire de Beyrouth a été par lui mis à même de prononcer ces sentences dans une pleine et entière liberté. Fuad Pacha s'est abstenu de peser en quelque façon que ce fût sur les décisions de ce Tribunal. Il leur donnera force exécutoire par l'apposition de sa signature, si elles sont conformes à l'intérêt public et à la justice, après avoir toutefois consulté la Commission. Sans bien entendu vouloir prendre la défense d'hommes qu'il a fait poursuivre comme criminels, il lui a paru que la différence des peines appliquées aux Cheiks Druses et aux officiers Ottomans avait été, dans la pensée du Tribunal, fondée sur une différence dans le degré de culpabilité et sur le texte même des lois. Aux termes du Code Pénal on ne peut frapper de mort que les auteurs ou les provocateurs de l'assassinat. Or les officiers Ottomans jugés à Beyrouth ne sont ni les auteurs ni les provocateurs des massacres. Ce sont des fonctionnaires qui ont commis une faute très grave, celle de ne pas travailler assez activement au maintien de l'ordre. Ils n'ont pas rempli leurs devoirs. Ils ont péché seulement par impuissance et par ineptie. Voilà pourquoi ils sont punis non point de la peine capitale réservée aux auteurs et aux provocateurs, mais de la détention à perpétuité dans une forteresse.

M. Bécclard objecte que le Muchir Ahmed Pacha n'était ni provocateur ni acteur dans les massacres de Damas, et que cependant il a été justement puni de mort; à quoi le Commissaire Ottoman objecte qu'Ahmed Pacha est resté dans une inaction complète, tandis que Kourchid Pacha a au moins essayé d'agir. Il n'est pas resté dans son palais; il a fait quelques efforts, insuffisants à la vérité; on ne peut donc le considérer comme complice. Il mérite une peine très sévère, non la mort pourtant.

M. de Rehfuës ne voit qu'une différence dans la conduite d'Ahmed Pacha et dans celle de Kourchid Pacha: c'est que l'un n'a rien fait, tandis que l'autre a seulement fait semblant d'agir. Il n'y a point là de circonstance très atténuante.

M. Novikow, pour éclairer sa conscience, aurait besoin de savoir dans quelle mesure les délégués de l'autorité ont pu ne pas se rendre compte de l'effet déplorable des mesures qu'ils avaient prises. Il est particulièrement difficile de s'expliquer comment Tahir Pacha, qui prétend avoir donné au Commandant de Deir-el-Kamar l'ordre formel de maintenir la sécurité de la ville, a pu quelques jours après devenir lui-même la principale cause des massacres.

M. de Rehfuës exprime le regret que l'autorité ne se soit pas mise en mesure de saisir chez Tahir Pacha les preuves des communications qui existaient entre lui et les Cheiks Druses.

Lord Dufferin rappelle que 5,000 individus ont été assassinés dans la Montagne en un très court espace de temps. Un événement si épouvantable ne saurait se produire inopinément. Quelqu'un en est responsable. Seulement il

peut être difficile, sans un examen approfondi des pièces, du procès, de reconnaître à qui appartient cette responsabilité. Lord Dufferin pense que les Commissaires feraient bien de profiter de l'absence de Fuad Pacha pour se livrer à l'étude des documents qui leur ont été communiqués; après quoi ils transmettraient à son Excellence une note contenant l'expression de leur opinion collective.

Fuad Pacha trouve en conscience que les officiers Ottomans dont ils s'agit sont assez sévèrement punis par la détention à perpétuité dans une forteresse. En présence de jugements qui leur appliquent la peine immédiatement inférieure à la peine de mort, il se rend difficilement compte des questions qui viennent de lui être posées par la Commission. Dans le cours de ce procès, dit-il, on n'a point recherché en faveur des officiers des circonstances atténuantes. La peine que le Tribunal propose de leur infliger est la plus élevée de toutes celles que la loi autorise, et avant de leur en infliger une plus rigoureuse encore, Fuad Pacha avoue à la Commission qu'il se trouverait dans la nécessité d'en référer à Constantinople.

MM. les Commissaires de France et de Russie se déclarent prêts à appuyer la motion de Lord Dufferin, et constatent de nouveau que la Commission, après avoir reconnu à plusieurs reprises que la plus grande part de responsabilité dans les événements pesait sur les fonctionnaires Ottomans, ne peut changer à cet égard d'opinion, sans avoir la preuve bien positive qu'elle s'était trompée.

M. de Weckbecker observe qu'il ne peut outrepasser le mandat qu'il a reçu de son Gouvernement et que, d'après les instructions qui lui ont été envoyées, il ne se croit pas autorisé à s'ingérer dans les jugements prononcés par les Tribunaux Ottomans. Il peut et doit provoquer la punition des coupables, mais non pas réclamer une aggravation de peines. Selon lui, si ce Tribunal absout un coupable, la Commission a le droit de demander la révision de la sentence, mais si le Tribunal, après avoir reconnu la culpabilité, prononce le plus haut degré même de la peine désignée par la loi, comme c'est précisément le cas dans les cinq sentences dont il s'agit, il lui semble que la Commission doit se contenter de cette sévérité.

Cependant M. de Weckbecker, tout en ne reconnaissant à la Commission dont il fait partie aucune compétence judiciaire, croit qu'elle peut demander de plus amples explications sur les motifs de ces jugements. Dans ces explications la Commission trouvera sans doute de nouvelles lumières sur l'origine et les causes des événements dont elle doit chercher à prévenir le retour, en proposant les bases de la réorganisation future du pays, objet le plus important de la tâche qui lui a été confiée. En conséquence M. le Commissaire d'Autriche adhère à la proposition de Lord Dufferin.

Les trois Commissaires de France, de Russie, et de Prusse croient devoir réserver expressément pour la Commission Internationale le droit d'exercer dans toute leur étendue les pouvoirs qui lui ont été conférés. Elle doit provoquer la répression, mais ces expressions veulent dire que non seulement la Commission doit provoquer la punition des coupables, mais qu'elle a le droit aussi d'en provoquer la juste punition. On ne saurait séparer en pareille matière le degré de la peine elle-même, car alors il suffirait que les principaux criminels fussent condamnés à huit jours d'arrêt, pour que le procès étant suivi de condamnation, la Commission n'ait pas le droit d'élever la voix. Une telle conséquence prouve jusqu'à l'évidence que l'interprétation particulière et inattendue donnée à l'instruction collective par M. le Commissaire d'Autriche, ne saurait être admise par ses collègues.

M. de Weckbecker ayant toutefois cru pouvoir accepter la motion de Lord Dufferin et chacun des membres de la Commission s'y étant rallié, il est entendu que MM. les Commissaires, après un examen attentif des pièces du procès, feront connaître à Fuad Pacha, par la remise d'une note collective, leur opinion sur les sentences rendues contre les Cheiks Druses et les officiers Ottomans par le Tribunal Extraordinaire de Beyrouth.

La séance est levée à cinq heures.

(Suivent les signatures.)

Inclosure 3 in No. 392.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrouth, January 24, 1861.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Excellency's information, copy of the Protocol of the eighteenth sitting of the Syrian Commission, held on the 9th instant.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 4 in No. 392.

Protocol of the Eighteenth Meeting of the Syrian Commission, held at Beyrouth, January 9, 1861.

LE neuf Janvier, mil huit cent soixante-un, tous les Commissaires, à l'exception de Fuad Pacha, représenté par Abro Efendi, étant réunis à Beyrouth sous la présidence de Lord Dufferin, Vice-Président, la séance est ouverte à deux heures et demie. Il est donné lecture du procès-verbal de l'avant-dernière séance (seizième), qui est adopté après quelques légères modifications.

M. le Commissaire Français demande au Délégué de Fuad Pacha des explications touchant un fait qui vient de se produire dans la Montagne. Après quelques scènes de désordre qui avaient eu lieu à Abadié, ce village, compris dans la Caimacamie Chrétienne, a été occupé par un détachement de troupes Ottomanes, envoyées de Beyrouth par Ahmed Pacha. M. Bécлар s'étonne qu'une telle mesure, attentatoire aux privilèges de la Montagne, ait été prise sans que les Commissaires en aient même été prévenus. Il ne doute pas que Youssouf Bey Karam n'ait en son pouvoir tous les moyens nécessaires pour maintenir l'ordre. Il tiendrait donc à savoir pourquoi des troupes Ottomanes ont été envoyées à Abadié, si elles y sont encore, et jusqu'à quand elles y resteront. Il réclame sur ces divers points les explications catégoriques dont il a besoin.

Abro Efendi promet de transmettre à son Excellence Fuad Pacha l'interpellation de M. Bécлар. Il donne, en attendant, quelques détails sur les circonstances qui ont provoqué la mesure dont il s'agit. Sur un avis parvenu à l'Autorité que deux Chrétiens venaient d'être assassinés, celle-ci ordonna une enquête qui constata qu'un seul était légèrement blessé par un coup de pierre. Quant à l'envoi d'un détachement de troupes à Abadié, il avait été provoqué par les inquiétudes manifestées par le Caimacam lui-même au sujet d'intrigues et d'un rassemblement de plus de 1,000 Druses, réunis dans les environs de ce village. Le Délégué Ottoman ajoute que le Caimacam avait envoyé des zaptiés pour opérer la rentrée des fonds arriérés de l'impôt. Ceux-ci, rendus à Abadié, ont commis des extorsions au détriment des Druses, en les obligeant à leur fournir différents objets que Youssouf Bey, informé du fait, n'a pas tardé à faire restituer en partie. Mais dans l'intervalle les Druses, soit à bout de patience, soit pour se soustraire au paiement d'un impôt qui devait les gêner beaucoup dans ce moment, se dispersèrent dans la vallée voisine, ne retournant dans leurs demeures que pendant la nuit. Alors les habitants Chrétiens répandirent l'inquiétude, en s'armant eux-mêmes et en répandant le bruit de cet attroupement. Fuad Pacha, informé de cette nouvelle immédiatement avant son départ, ordonna au Gouverneur-Général d'aller visiter ce village. Rendu sur les lieux, Ahmed Pacha rassembla les habitants, Chrétiens et Druses indistinctement, et après avoir rassuré les uns et exhorté les autres à reprendre leurs travaux, il leur donna l'assurance la plus positive que ni le Gouvernement ni le Caimacam ne permettront jamais qu'une partie de la population exerce des vexations sur l'autre. C'est pour rassurer de fait tant les Chrétiens que les Druses à cet égard qu'un détachement fut expédié à Abadié, détachement que l'Autorité retirera aussitôt que ces inquiétudes auront cessé.

M. Bécлар objecte que de deux choses l'une : ou Youssouf Bey Karam est en mesure de garantir le maintien de l'ordre dans la Caimacamie Chrétienne, et alors l'occupation d'Abadié demeure sans explication, ou il n'a en son pouvoir que des forces insuffisantes, et alors il y a vivement lieu de regretter que le Plénipotentiaire du Sultan lui ait confié une tâche sans le mettre en mesure de la remplir.

Lord Dufferin voudrait qu'avant de porter un jugement sur le fait de l'occu-

pation, on sût précisément à quoi s'en tenir sur les événements qui s'étaient accomplis à Abadié. Il paraît que Fuad Pacha, ayant envoyé dans ce village, comme partout ailleurs, un agent chargé de se livrer à des perquisitions pour retrouver les objets pillés par les Druses chez les Chrétiens, ces derniers ont jugé à propos de réclamer non seulement la restitution de ce qui leur avait été pris dans les derniers troubles, mais encore le paiement de vieilles créances, remontant à l'époque de l'occupation égyptienne. Youssouf Bey Karam aurait alors envoyé pour procéder au recouvrement de ces créances une troupe nombreuse de cavaliers, lesquels, ayant vécu pendant plusieurs semaines aux dépens des habitants de ce village, ne l'auraient quitté qu'après l'avoir complètement épuisé. Un seul d'entr'eux y était resté, et c'est celui-là qui a été si fort maltraité. Lord Dufferin est porté à croire que l'on trouvera dans ce double fait d'une réclamation inattendue de créances très-anciennes de la part des Chrétiens, et d'une dilapidation de la part des soldats de Youssouf Karam, l'explication de ce qui vient de se passer.

M. Béclard fait observer que Youssouf Karam a puni de peines corporelles très-rigoureuses ceux d'entre ses gens qui s'étaient rendus coupables d'exactions à Abadié.

M. Novikow rappelle que, d'après les règlements existants, un seul point de la Montagne, Beteddin, peut être occupé par les troupes Ottomanes. En conséquence, l'envoi d'un détachement à Abadié, s'il n'a pas eu lieu sur la demande du Caimacam intérimaire et par suite d'une nécessité réelle, constitue une contravention à des règlements garantis par les Puissances, et qui ne peuvent être modifiés sans leur assentiment.

Abro Efendi répond qu'il n'est nullement dans l'intention de l'autorité de porter une atteinte quelconque à ces règlements, mais qu'il est dans son devoir de rassurer les populations, partout où il est besoin, par un déploiement de force militaire, et de consolider l'autorité du Caimacam. En ce qui concerne l'objection de M. Béclard que le Gouvernement n'accordait pas une force suffisante à Youssouf Bey, Abro Efendi réplique que le Gouvernement lui a donné une force supérieure à celle dont tous les Caimacams Chrétiens avaient disposé jusqu'ici.

M. de Rehfuës appelle l'attention de la Commission sur la manière dont la mesure de l'arrestation des Druses s'est opérée. Un grand nombre de ceux qui avaient été dénoncés n'ont pas été arrêtés, et les principaux se sont échappés à prix d'argent. On cite le nom d'officiers qui se sont prêtés à ces coupables intrigues.

Abro Efendi proteste énergiquement contre la possibilité d'un tel fait.

M. Béclard partage toutes les craintes de M. de Rehfuës à cet égard. Il aurait fallu, selon lui, prévenir le mouvement général de panique qui s'est produit parmi les Druses, et s'opposer à leur fuite, ainsi que le Général de Beaufort l'a fait si efficacement sur un point.

M. Novikow constate que 500 Druses, inscrits sur les listes, ont pu s'échapper.

Abro Efendi répond que, dans cette masse d'arrestations, il est possible qu'il y ait des individus qui soient parvenus à s'échapper, grâce à l'avertissement qui leur avait été donné par quelques Chrétiens eux-mêmes.

Lord Dufferin ne croit pas que l'on puisse en pareille matière se fier aux rumeurs publiques. Une mesure d'arrestation aussi étendue ne pouvait s'exécuter sans difficulté, et il est naturel que ce soient les plus coupables qui aient pris l'alarme les premiers. M. le Commissaire Britannique saisit cette occasion pour appeler la sollicitude de ses collègues sur l'état de la nation Druse, état qui selon lui n'est plus supportable, et la menace d'une prochaine dissolution.

M. le Commissaire Français regrette que les lenteurs mises à l'exécution des mesures de répression et d'indemnités, déterminent inutilement chez les Druses un malaise qui ne peut servir ni de satisfaction à la justice, ni de réparation aux Chrétiens. Il émet encore une fois le vœu que l'on procède avec rigueur au châtiment exemplaire des principaux coupables, avec promptitude au règlement de la question d'indemnité, et que, ces deux opérations une fois accomplies et la procédure fermée, il y ait entre les Druses et les Maronites une égalité parfaite.

M. Novikow fait remarquer que les deux opérations de la répression et de la réparation ont entre elles une grande affinité, et qu'il serait urgent de les faire marcher de front.

Abro Efendi répond que le refus des Chrétiens de venir déposer devant le Tribunal de Moktara, et fournir les preuves de la culpabilité ou au moins de l'identité des individus arrêtés sur leur dénonciation, n'est pas de nature à activer le résultat définitif des mesures prises par son Excellence Fuad Pacha.

Lord Dufferin a la conviction intime que ce refus, dicté aux Chrétiens par leurs Evêques, a été calculé dans l'intention de provoquer de la part de Fuad Pacha la condamnation en bloc des 1,200 individus désignés par eux dans une première liste comme coupables au premier chef.

M. Novikow répond à Lord Dufferin que les Evêques, à l'intermédiaire desquels on a fait appel pour recueillir les dénonciations et les transmettre, une fois cette transmission accomplie, se sont trouvés obligés en conscience de ne pas aller plus loin. M. Béclard croit savoir que non seulement ils n'ont pas détourné leurs coreligionnaires de se rendre à l'invitation de Fuad Pacha, mais que plusieurs d'entr'eux les y ont même fortement engagés. Si les Chrétiens s'y sont refusés, c'est que le Tribunal de Moktara leur a sans doute inspiré moins de confiance que celui de Beyrouth, et qu'ayant des doutes sur l'issue de cette procédure, ils ont voulu éviter de s'y compromettre.

M. de Rehfuës est d'avis que le nombre restreint des condamnations qui d'après le principe adopté doivent être prononcées, permet à Fuad Pacha de se contenter des dépositions de ceux d'entre les Chrétiens qui ont répondu à son appel.

M. de Weckbecker pense que ce n'est ni dans un sentiment de crainte, ni dans l'hypothèse d'une influence exercée par les Evêques, que l'on peut trouver l'explication de la conduite des Chrétiens dans cette circonstance, mais dans un sentiment particulier aux peuples de ce pays qui ne comprennent encore rien aux formalités de la justice publique. C'est la première fois qu'elle fonctionne devant eux, et qu'on procède ainsi à la répression.

M. le Commissaire Français interpelle Abro Efendi relativement à l'un des premiers actes accomplis par le nouveau Gouverneur de Damas. Emin Pacha, aussitôt son arrivée, a dissous le Conseil Provincial, et provoqué le renouvellement de cette assemblée par un corps électoral qu'il a institué *ad hoc*. Le résultat de cette opération a été d'exclure du Conseil des hommes honorables que Fuad Pacha y avait conservés, et notamment Salih Agha Mohayeni, homme considérable par sa position et son caractère, et qui, pendant les événements, a recueilli chez lui un grand nombre de Chrétiens. Cette exclusion ne peut qu'encourager les tendances déplorables de la population Musulmane de Damas. La responsabilité de l'élection remontant évidemment à Emin Pacha, M. Béclard regrette que Fuad Pacha n'imprime pas au nouveau Gouverneur de Damas une direction plus conforme à ses propres intentions.

Abro Efendi ne possède aucune information sur les faits rapportés par M. Béclard, mais il conteste dès-à-présent à la Commission le droit de critiquer l'autorité locale sur ses actes administratifs, tels que la nomination ou l'exclusion des membres d'un Conseil, exclusivement placé sous sa dépendance. Il fait observer de plus qu'il ne connaît aucun système électoral en Turquie dans les opérations duquel des agents étrangers aient le droit d'exercer une ingérence quelconque. Il ne doute pas d'autre part que le Plénipotentiaire Ottoman ne recommande la personne dont il s'agit à toute la bienveillance des autorités de Damas, en égard à sa conduite louable vis-à-vis des Chrétiens.

M. Novikow remarque qu'en dehors même du fait de l'élection, la Commission a parfaitement le droit de signaler le fâcheux effet que l'exclusion de Mohayeni aura produit sur l'esprit de la population.

M. Béclard pour son compte n'admet pas qu'aucune restriction puisse être apportée à l'exercice des droits dont la Commission est investie. Jusqu'à ce que la Syrie soit réorganisée, Fuad Pacha est armé de pouvoirs sans limites, et la Commission de son côté a sur tous les actes de l'autorité, pendant cette période transitoire, un droit de censure dont M. le Commissaire de France croit devoir user dans cette circonstance.

La séance est levée à quatre heures et trois-quart.

(Suivent les signatures.)

Inclosure 5 in No. 392.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, January 27, 1861.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Excellency's information, copies of a correspondence which have passed between Major Fraser and myself, respecting the course to be pursued towards the Druse prisoners at Mokhtarah.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 6 in No. 392.

Major Fraser to Lord Dufferin.

(Extract.)

Mokhtarah, January 17, 1861.

THE Christian Deputies are leaving Mokhtarah to-day in some haste, without the Pasha having been able to come to any arrangement with them. He called them together the day before yesterday, and in a lengthy speech explained to them that he had called them here for the purpose of assisting him in the punishment of the guilty Druses, whether by giving direct evidence, or by any other information in their possession. That it was not in his power, and he did not pretend to have the intention of putting to death any such number as that demanded in their lists, the most moderate of which contained 1,200 names; but as they had already declined generally to testify against individuals whose names had been placed on that list, he would now ask them to arrange another, of about 200 names of the Druses they conceived to have been most guilty in connection with the late massacres (whether they were now prisoners or yet in flight), arranged and numbered according to their degree of guilt, from the highest and so on downwards. He wished them, however, to understand he by no means engaged to put any such number to death.

After taking a day to discuss the proposal, they yesterday afternoon replied they were not able to comply with this invitation. That the previous lists having been prepared by the whole people, it would be incompetent for them to draw up another of less extent, and which would invalidate the first, without reference to all who had composed that list, and that they could not supply evidence against individuals without calling on the whole population to furnish it.

The Pasha, finding he could come to no practical result with them, has to-day permitted them to return to their homes.

He is now engaged in classifying the accused according to their degrees of apparent guilt, and, as far as he has yet made up his mind, his plan now seems to be to try the more important cases by the aid of special sworn depositions in his possession, the testimony of Druses already given on oath during the trials at Beyrout, designations of individuals as principal actors made by the Druse Chiefs now at Beyrout during their trials, or confessions of the prisoners themselves, several of these kinds of evidence being already concentrated against the same individuals.

He will also seek to avail himself of any direct evidence that may appear (and I am myself aware of some only awaiting an opportunity), but is unwilling to call on the whole Christian body to furnish evidence, as this, he fears, would involve him again in the difficulty of having to meet another exaggerated demand for vengeance.

When he sees what condemnations can be or on sufficient grounds shall have been made, he will consult the Commission before proceeding further.

This is a hasty sketch of what his Excellency is meditating, which, with the above particulars, I am anxious you should receive simultaneously with the arrival of the Deputies at Beyrout, if possible. I beg you, therefore, to pardon its necessarily hurried form.

Inclosure 7 in No. 392.

*Major Fraser to Lord Dufferin.**Mokhtarah, January 19, 1861.*

My Lord,

IN discussing with Fuad Pasha last evening the basis upon which it would be competent for the Court to record sentence of death against any of the Druse prisoners now under examination here, I felt it necessary to object to the wide scope his Excellency claimed for the optional award of this penalty. I took occasion to remark that I had understood the intention of the European Commission to be that capital punishment should be limited to cases of cold-blooded murder alone, an opinion in which I am confirmed by reference to your Lordship's communication of January 1, addressed to me.

To my objection his Excellency replied that this was by no means the intention of the Commission; on the contrary, it had been decided that individuals coming under any of the following categories should be amenable to capital punishment, viz. :—

1. Those engaged as authors or excitors in connection with the late massacres.

2. Those acting as Chiefs of bands engaged in murdering, burning, or plundering; and

3. Those guilty of cold-blooded murder with their own hands.

His Excellency further stated that your Lordship had certainly laid upon the table a proposition that murder should be the only crime for which sentence of death should be passed, that two eye-witnesses should be required, and that the number of executions should be inferior to those of Damascus, but that these limitations had not been decided upon by the Commission.

I asked his Excellency to permit me to peruse the Protocol of proceedings on that occasion, but as no copy has been brought to Mokhtarah, I should feel obliged if your Lordship would furnish me with one, or with such other information as may seem necessary for my guidance.

I have in the meantime requested his Excellency to abstain from recording sentence of death against any prisoner who shall not have been found guilty of cold-blooded murder.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. J. FRASER.

Inclosure 8 in No. 392.

*Major Fraser to Lord Dufferin.**Mokhtarah, January 23, 1861.*

My Lord,

THE labours of the Extraordinary Commission having now been brought to a close, a report of these has been presented to his Excellency Fuad Pasha; comprising, among other documents, a list of nearly 300 persons who have been more or less compromised in the late outbreak.

In consequence of the refusal of the Christians to bear testimony against individuals his Excellency has found much difficulty in establishing distinctly the guilt of any one among the prisoners. And the evidence has necessarily been of a presumptive character.

Under these circumstances, and taking into consideration the number of Druse men, women, and children, amounting to 176 persons who have been murdered by the Christians, besides 85 wounded since the occupation of the Mountain by the French troops, their loss of life during the outbreak amounting to 1,300 men, together with the miserable condition to which they have been reduced by the pillage of their villages, his Excellency considers that the execution of a comparatively small number, in addition to those already condemned at Beyrout, will suffice to give a necessary example for the future, and to meet the demands of a discriminating justice.

His Excellency purposes, therefore, to transmit at once to Beyrout the Report of the Extraordinary Commission, together with his own recommendation thereupon, in the hope that the European Commissioners may be able to

sympathize with the views which an anxious inquiry into all the circumstances connected with the origin and progress of the late disastrous events have compelled him to adopt.

His Excellency is further most desirous that the decision of the Commission be re-transmitted speedily, it being hardly possible to continue to hold his position in a petty mountain village with 800 prisoners on hand, who, from the impossibility of finding proper accommodation for such numbers, and from the severity of the weather, are undergoing severe suffering, of which some have even died; while the keeping up supplies over mountain paths for the prisoners, and for the troops who guard them, is, in such weather, difficult in the extreme.

My desire to send these lines by the present express will, I hope, plead my apology for the absence of details, and for the very hurried form of this communication.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. J. FRASER.

Inclosure 9 in No. 392.

Lord Dufferin to Major Fraser.

Sir,

Beyrout, January 23, 1861.

WITH reference to your despatch of the 19th instant, I have to state that, at a meeting of the Commissioners held on the 14th of November, 1860, it was decided that, in dealing with those of the Druse nation implicated in the late massacres, the circumstances of the case precluded the possibility of passing on those found guilty by the summary process it was proposed to adopt, any other penalty than that of death. The reason of such a determination is sufficiently obvious. The gravity of the punishment would itself become a reason for rejecting any but the most direct and trustworthy evidence; would prevent the application of a summary, and therefore imperfect, mode of investigation to complicated and doubtful cases; and would ensure the punishment of the most blood-stained of the assassins. Such a restriction, moreover, had the further advantage of excluding from judicial pursuit those of the Druse nation who merely took up arms in their own defence. This precaution had become all the more necessary from the fact that, in proportion as our investigations elucidated the cause of the disturbances, the clearer it became that the Christians had provoked the Druses into a war of extermination.

In order to leave as little doubt as possible upon so important a subject, it was further agreed that only those who come under one of the three following categories should be considered obnoxious to punishment:—

- "1. Les instigateurs, ayant ou non pris part personnellement aux massacres.
- "2. Les Chefs de bandes qui ont dirigé les assassins et les incendiaires.
- "3. Les individus dénoncés par la voix publique comme ayant commis le plus grand nombre de meurtres, ou comme ayant agi dans des circonstances qui aggravent leur culpabilité."

Armed with these recommendations, his Excellency summoned the Bishops of the various sects, and having communicated to them at large the view of the Commission, requested them to consult with the leading men of the several communities, and present him with the names of those who might be considered deserving of capital punishment.

The result of this invitation was a list of 4,600 persons, whom these ecclesiastics wished, in cold blood, to consign to death. It is, indeed, pretended that they were upon this occasion the mere mouth-pieces of the Christian notables; but any one acquainted with the influence exercised by the prelates of the sects in this country must smile at the introduction of such a flimsy pretext.

In the face, then, of so obvious a determination on the part of the Maronite leaders to procure the wholesale destruction of their enemies, it became incumbent on those whose aim it was to secure the accomplishment of an impartial, though rigorous, justice to guard against the blind vindictiveness of the Christian prosecutors by devising limitations still stricter than those which had already proved so ineffectual to restrain the unscrupulous denunciations of the priesthood. My own uneasiness on the subject was further enhanced by the fact that, notwithstanding all Fuad Pasha's remonstrances against such unreasonable and

cruel conduct, the Bishops could be finally induced to content themselves with nothing less than a demand for 1,200 heads, and that every day was furnishing us with the most startling proofs of the utter untrustworthiness of the denunciations supplied by the Christians.

It was under these circumstances that I submitted to the Commission the four propositions to which you refer. Though we did not come to any vote upon the subject, the proposals, after some desultory discussion, were generally acceded to, and an especial affirmation was accorded to the one which restricted the capital punishment in the Mountain to a lower number than that of the criminals hanged at Damascus.

In confirmation of this statement I inclose you a private letter on the subject from M. Bécard, the substance of which you will perhaps be good enough to communicate confidentially to his Excellency Fuad Pasha.

With regard, however, to the course now to be pursued, I am ready to admit that the fact of the Christians having refused to come into Court, or to enter into any details relative to the comparative guilt of those whom they have denounced, or to afford any evidence to show on what grounds these accusations have been founded, considerably alters the case, and renders it less incumbent on us to insist on the last-mentioned limitation being adhered to. In fact, the degree to which they are to be pressed on his Excellency Fuad Pasha must depend upon the spirit in which he is prosecuting his investigation. If you think he is being actuated by a conscientious desire to bring the really guilty to justice, without reference to other considerations, it may be well to allow him to execute his painful task without interference; if, on the other hand, he seems inclined to take advantage of his present opportunity to destroy the Druse aristocracy by endeavouring to bring the richest of them within the meaning of the original categories, it would be well to insist on a stricter adherence to the recommendation of the Commission. Under any circumstances, I would observe that no considerations of expediency, no desire to get the thing over quickly, no fear of public opinion, ought to induce his Excellency to order any one for execution unless the evidence against him shall amount to a moral certainty of his guilt. On the other hand, we have to deal with an occasion and with a state of society in which a nice adherence to the refinements of European legal practice would be out of place; we must, therefore, content ourselves with taking such precautions as the circumstances of the case admit, and I have not the slightest doubt but that the assistance Fuad Pasha will derive from your impartiality and discernment will enable his Excellency to arrive at a conclusion which will allow us to consider that we have done our duty.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

P.S.—In reference to this subject I beg to inclose you an extract from a despatch of Lord Elgin's with reference to the assassinations lately committed in China.

You will perceive that, even under such terrible provocation, his Lordship never loses sight of the necessity of having evidence to justify the condemnation of murderers, however atrocious may be their crimes.

D. AND C.

Inclosure 10 in No. 392.

The Earl of Elgin to Lord J. Russell.

(Extract.)

Peking, October 25, 1860.

OR, I might have required that the persons guilty of cruelty to our countrymen, or of the violation of a flag of truce, should be surrendered. But, if I had made this demand in general terms, some miserable subordinates would, probably, have been given up, whom it would have been difficult to pardon, and impossible to punish. And if I had specified San-ko-lin-sin, of whose guilt, in violating a flag of truce, evidence sufficient to ensure his condemnation by a court-martial could be furnished, I should have made a demand which, it may be confidently affirmed, the Chinese Government would not have conceded, and mine could not have enforced.

I must add that, throwing the responsibility for the acts of Government in this way on individuals, resembles too closely the Chinese form of conducting war, to approve itself altogether to my judgment.

Inclosure 11 in No. 392.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, January 27, 1861.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Excellency's information, extract from a despatch which I have received from Major Fraser dated the 19th instant, and marked Secret and Confidential, reporting the substance of a conversation which he had held with his Excellency Fuad Pasha respecting a prolonged foreign occupation.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 12 in No. 392.

Major Fraser to Lord Dufferin.

(Extract.)

Mokhtarah, January 19, 1861.

IN a private conversation with Fuad Pasha this evening on the affairs of the Meten, and on the possibility of my having shortly to bring again under his notice the dangerous condition to which Nazareth had been reduced by mal-administration and intrigue, his Excellency remarked that no one could be more sensible than he in how many directions healthy and vigorous action was necessary on the part of the Government; but while he continued to be trammelled as he now was by the presence of a French army and by the intrigues on foot to secure a prolongation of the occupation, it was quite impossible for him to give attention to the general business of the Government. He felt obliged to hold himself in readiness to counteract, before it could become serious, each new excitement or more hidden scheme, and only defeated one to find half-a-dozen more springing up.

In short, it had come to this, that it was quite impossible a French occupation and he could continue to co-exist in the country.

Having stated, in answer to the Pasha's query whether anything had been decided in England regarding the withdrawal of the French troops, that I had really no information on the subject, his Excellency continued by saying, that so baneful, in his opinion, was the presence of the French troops, utterly preventing him, as it did, from giving his attention to the pressing demands of the public service, that if they did not withdraw at the expiration of the term fixed by the Convention, viz., in the month of April next, he had made up his mind to send in his resignation. It would then be for the authorities at Constantinople to send hither a man who could conduct the affairs of the country in conjunction with, and to the satisfaction of, the French, for he certainly could not.

I rejoined that whoever might be charged with the government of this country (for I did not think it necessary or desirable the Pasha should suppose he was the only person who might be considered equal to such a task), I had little doubt would be quickly relieved of the disadvantage of a foreign occupation, if he could succeed in inspiring the European Commissioners with such implicit confidence in the uprightness of his intentions as would enable them to give him their unanimous and unhesitating support.

No. 392a.

Sir H. Bulwer to Lord J. Russell.—(Received February 2.)

(No. 70.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, January 23, 1861.

I INCLOSE a copy of the Turkish project for the government of Syria. As I have but just received it I have not time to discuss its merits.

But it differs in some degree from what I first understood it would be from the verbal explanations given to me, and appears more confused and less comprehensive.

I will endeavour by Saturday's post to write something more satisfactory on the subject. In regard to the indemnity, I certainly thought that if the Porte were able to take this obligation upon itself, at once pay a portion and give Fuad orders to raise the rest in the least oppressive manner, that this course would have been the most desirable; for the plan proposed, as far as I understand it, is liable to objections both on the score of practicability and justice. But it is most essential that there should, at all events, be no delay in this matter, and I have, therefore, pressed the Porte either to propose at once some satisfactory plan of its own, sending the money which it first promised to send by this steamer, or to give Fuad Pasha full powers to act as he may think the case requires. I confess I still think myself that it is most hard to make the most respectable part of the Mussulman population at Damascus pay for the whole mischief that was perpetrated chiefly by the Druses from the Hauran and the rabble of the town, and which ought to have been prevented by the Imperial Government. Moreover, though I have little doubt but that the indemnity to be paid is but an inadequate compensation for the injury sustained, I do not know whether all of it can be paid by the parties on whom it is assessed without the complete ruin of those parties.

I think that by this post Fuad will receive full powers to do whatever he thinks proper; but several Councils have been lately held upon this subject, and I have not heard the result of that which was held last night.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY L. BULWER.

Inclosure in No. 392a.

Articles containing the Bases for the Future Government of Syria.

[See Inclosure in No. 381.]

No. 392b.

Aali Pasha to M. Musurus.—(Communicated to Lord J. Russell by M. Musurus, February 6.)

Mon cher Ambassadeur,

Le 20 Janvier, 1861.

MON expédition d'aujourd'hui vous apprendra les bases que la Sublime Porte vient d'adopter sur l'organisation future de la Syrie. Je joins ici, pour votre information, le projet de Lord Dufferin, projet dont la simple lecture vous mettra à même d'en juger le mérite et la portée. Mon intention n'est pas de discuter un à un tous les Articles du plan du Commissaire Britannique; le principe qui semble l'avoir dicté, ne pouvant pas être admis par la Sublime Porte, il serait tout-à-fait inutile de s'étendre sur les détails. Tout ce que j'ai donc à vous dire, c'est que le plan en question ne tend à rien moins qu'à ériger une nouvelle Principauté, quasi indépendante, soumise à la direction d'une Commission Européenne; en d'autres termes, à séparer la Syrie de la domination Ottomane.

Vous concevrez facilement, mon cher Ambassadeur, combien le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Impériale serait désolé, si par malheur le Cabinet de Sa Majesté Britannique, après avoir pris en sérieuse considération la position désastreuse qu'une telle combinaison créerait et à l'ensemble de l'Empire et à la Syrie elle-même, ne revenait pas sur sa première impression; le principe de l'intégrité de l'Empire Ottoman si énergiquement et, je puis le dire, si efficace-

ment défendu par l'Angleterre, recevrait une nouvelle atteinte dans une de ses plus importantes parties.

Sans doute, les malheurs qui ont frappé les populations du Mont Liban et de Damas sont immenses. Le cœur paternel de notre auguste Souverain a été le premier à s'affliger des horreurs dont ces pays ont été le théâtre.

La Grande Bretagne a eu aussi, il n'y a pas longtemps, des désastres pareils à déplorer et à reprimander dans ses possessions de l'Inde Orientale. Personne n'a songé à accuser l'Administration Anglaise de négligence ou d'incapacité. Comme nous, elle a été surprise par les événements, et comme nous, elle a rempli son devoir en infligeant des punitions sévères aux auteurs des forfaits commis.

Si quelques uns de nos Agents ont pu manquer à leur devoir, le Gouvernement a prouvé qu'il n'entendait pas tolérer de pareils manques; et il leur a fait payer leur faute au prix de leur sang ou de leur existence politique.

Le Gouvernement Impérial eût mérité la réprobation du monde civilisé, l'Europe eût été en droit et en devoir de penser à substituer un autre état de choses, si la répression n'eût pas été aussi prompte que possible, si par suite de la triste expérience que nous venons de faire, nous n'eussions pas préparé un mode d'administration capable d'empêcher le renouvellement des crimes passés et à garantir la sécurité et la prospérité future des habitants de la Syrie.

Je ne sache pas qu'il y ait un Gouvernement qui ne veuille et qui ne fasse tout ce qui est dans les limites du possible pour maintenir la tranquillité dans son intérieur, et pour faire jouir ses sujets de toute sorte de sécurité. C'est le premier des devoirs de tout Etat régulier. La Sublime Porte apprécie l'importance de ce devoir, et elle s'efforce à le remplir fidèlement. Mais ce but ne peut être atteint qu'à condition d'avoir le libre exercice des droits sans lesquels toute autorité devient illusoire. Ainsi, avec l'introduction du nouveau système que nous avons arrêtée, avec la pleine jouissance de cette liberté d'action inhérente et indispensable à l'indépendance de chaque Gouvernement, la Sublime Porte n'hésiterait pas à déclarer, en face du monde entier, sa conviction intime de pouvoir, par l'aide de Dieu, maintenir l'ordre et la paix dans toute la Syrie; tandis qu'avec le mode proposé par Lord Dufferin, il serait plus qu'insensé à la Sublime Porte d'assumer la moindre responsabilité à cet égard.

Nous savons que le désir de l'Angleterre et des autres Grandes Puissances n'est point d'amener un démembrement. Elles ne cherchent que le moyen d'élever une digue contre de nouvelles dévastations du torrent insurrectionnel. Nous ne demandons, et nous ne pouvons demander, non plus autre chose. Puisque c'est ainsi, pourquoi souleverait-on des difficultés pour l'adoption des mesures qui, sans avoir les grandes dangers que nous signalons plus haut, offriraient toutes les garanties désirables? Et pourquoi persisterait-on à préférer un plan dont la première conséquence serait de soustraire la Syrie à la souveraineté du Sultan? Non, nous sommes convaincus que Lord John Russell, après avoir pris connaissance de notre projet, voudra bien en reconnaître la parfaite suffisance, et qu'il ne refusera pas d'accorder à nos observations sur les inconvénients de l'opinion de son Commissaire une attention bienveillante et amicale.

Vous devez vous rappeler, mon cher Ambassadeur, que nous n'avons jamais reconnu la compétence de la Commission Européenne dans l'organisation de la Syrie proprement dite.

Nous avons toujours et formellement déclaré qu'en matière administrative, les délibérations de la Commission ne devaient porter que sur les modifications à introduire dans l'organisation du Mont Liban. Non-seulement notre déclaration réitérée n'a rencontré aucune objection, mais on nous a constamment répondu qu'il ne s'agissait que de réviser le système établi en 1845. Nous pouvons invoquer à ce sujet le témoignage de MM. les Représentants à Constantinople, aussi bien que le texte des instructions identiques données à la Commission.

En résumé, mon cher Ambassadeur, c'est un devoir impérieux et solennel que je remplis aujourd'hui, en vous invitant au nom de la Sublime Porte à soumettre à l'appréciation éclairée de son Excellence le Principal Secrétaire d'Etat pour les Affaires Etrangères les raisons vitales qui nous obligent à ne pouvoir adhérer à aucun prix à la proposition de Lord Dufferin, et à persister dans notre résolution, dont, comme je vous l'ai dit en commençant, mon office en date de ce jour vous donnera les détails.

Veillez, &c.
(Signé) AALI.

No. 393.

Sir H. Bulwer to Lord J. Russell.—(Received February 8.)

(No. 83.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, January 30, 1861.

REFERRING to your Lordship's No. 31 of January 17, I thought it better to make to his Highness Aali Pasha the inclosed communication respecting the withdrawal of the French troops from Syria.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY L. BULWER.

Inclosure in No. 393.

Sir H. Bulwer to Aali Pasha.

Highness,

Constantinople, January 29, 1861.

WE have had one or two conversations lately on the subject of the withdrawal of the French troops from Syria, and I think it as well that your Highness should know as clearly as possible the language which Her Majesty's Government holds to me on this subject.

It says: You are not to urge the Porte to insist on the withdrawal of the French troops from Syria if the Porte itself considers that for the peace of the country those troops ought to remain, and that without them it could not be answerable for the lives and property of the inhabitants. But if the Ottoman Government thinks a foreign force is not required, and that the Ottoman Government deems that without such force it can fulfil the duties of a Government in Syria, and be answerable for the security and tranquillity of the country, then it should state so at once, and clearly.

As for Her Majesty's Government, the assurances of Lord Dufferin certainly tend to create in it a belief that the French army is no longer necessary, and, if the Porte is also of this opinion, Her Majesty's Government will support the view it takes upon this subject. But it is to be honestly and frankly understood that Her Majesty's Government does not, directly nor indirectly, impose, nor attempt to impose, any policy on the Porte which the Porte itself is not predisposed to follow, believing it conscientiously the best for the interests of the Sultan, and the peace of his dominions.

I have informed Her Majesty's Government that you had already informed me that the Porte, acting in this case on its own unbiassed convictions, had determined to require the execution of the Treaty of the 5th of September, and the evacuation of Syria; and, as far as I can ascertain the sentiments of all the members of the Sultan's Government, there is but one feeling on the matter.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY L. BULWER.

No. 394.

Sir H. Bulwer to Lord J. Russell.—(Received February 8.)

(No. 84.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, January 30, 1861.

ON receiving Lord Dufferin's despatches relative to the conduct of Fuad Pasha respecting the Druses, I brought the matter at once before the Porte, and Aali Pasha agreeing with me, wrote to his Excellency the Turkish Commissioner enjoining him to act with justice and circumspection, and not to extend the punishment which those who were criminal amongst the Druse tribe deserved, to an unjust and indiscriminate persecution of the whole Druse people.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY L. BULWER.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received February 8.)

(No. 206.)

My Lord,

Paris, February 7, 1861.

M. THOUVENEL has received a despatch from M. Bécclard dated the 17th ultimo, in which he gives an account of a meeting of the Syrian Commissioners to receive a report made by Fuad Pasha of the result of the trial of the Druses, about 300 in number, taken at Mokhtarah.

It appears that Fuad Pasha had informed the Commission that the sentence of death had been awarded to about twenty of them, and that he desired to know whether the Commission would be satisfied with that number; that the Commission had replied unanimously that that number would not be sufficient, and had insisted on the execution of any Druse implicated in any of the massacres which had occurred in any of the Christian villages.

M. Thouvenel thinks that this savoured too much of unnecessary vengeance, and he has therefore written to M. Bécclard to say that it is not a holocaust which is wanted, but the execution of one or two of the ringleaders of the Druses with a view of inspiring a wholesome terror among the rest.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

No. 396.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received February 8.)

(No. 207.)

My Lord,

Paris, February 7, 1861.

I HAVE informed M. Thouvenel that the Porte having consented to the reassembling of the Conference on Syrian affairs, your Lordship had authorised me to take part in them, and I inquired at what period he proposed to convoke a meeting. His Excellency said he would convoke one as soon as Vefyk Pasha should be in possession of his instructions. His Excellency added that as yet he had received no answer from St. Petersburg to his proposal to reassemble the Conference, but, as he could not doubt that it would be agreed to by Prince Gortschakoff, he was apprehensive that the delay was occasioned by his desire to couple with that agreement the renewal of the Russian demand of last year, that the whole question of the treatment of Christians in Turkey should be brought under the notice of the Conference.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

No. 397.

Lord J. Russell to Earl Cowley.

(No. 160.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, February 8, 1861.

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 206 of the 7th instant, reporting a communication made to you by M. Thouvenel of the substance of a despatch from the French Commissioner in Syria, containing an account of a meeting of the Commission to receive Fuad Pasha's Report of the result of the trial of the Druses taken at Mokhtarah.

I have to state to your Excellency that Her Majesty's Government concur with M. Thouvenel in opinion that the execution of one or two of the most criminal of the ringleaders of the Druses will be sufficient to inspire a wholesome fear amongst the rest and to satisfy the ends of justice.

Sir H. Bulwer has been instructed to inform Lord Dufferin that Her Majesty's Government concur in M. Thouvenel's opinion.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

Lord J. Russell to Sir H. Bulwer.

(No. 76.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, February 8, 1861.

I TRANSMIT, for your information, a copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Ambassador at Paris,* reporting what M. Thouvenel had stated to him on the subject of M. Bécclard's Report of a meeting of the Syrian Commission to receive Fuad Pasha's Report of the result of the trial of the Druses taken at Mokhtarah.

I have informed Earl Cowley that Her Majesty's Government concur with M. Thouvenel in opinion that the execution of one or two of the most criminal of the ringleaders of the Druses will be sufficient to inspire a wholesome fear amongst the rest, and to satisfy the ends of justice; and I have also informed Earl Cowley that you have been instructed to acquaint Lord Dufferin with the sentiments of Her Majesty's Government on this matter.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 399.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received February 9.)

(No. 209.)

My Lord,

Paris, February 8, 1861.

IN my despatch No. 207 of yesterday's date I mentioned to your Lordship the apprehensions entertained by M. Thouvenel lest the Russian Government should desire to take advantage of the reassembling of the Conference on Syrian affairs, to provoke a discussion upon the general state of the Christian subjects of the Porte, and to propose resolutions for the adoption of the assembled Representatives.

I would beg your Lordship to consider and to inform me what course you would wish me to take under such circumstances; I ask your Lord's instructions for the following reason.

It will be in your Lordship's recollection that an attempt of this kind was made when the Conference was first assembled in July last. My despatch No. 1,006 of the 31st of that month gives an account of this attempt; and your Lordship will, no doubt, remember that I was obliged to hint, in as courteous terms as possible, that I should leave the Conference if it was persisted in, when, after a reference to St. Petersburg, it was abandoned. But I heard afterwards that General Kisseleff's conduct had not been approved by his Government, and that it was considered that he ought to have shown greater energy in carrying out the instructions with which he had been furnished.

These tactics may be repeated now with more perseverance, and it is as well that I should call your Lordship's attention to this possibility. Perhaps the best way of defeating them, should the intention to resort to them be manifested, will be to apprise M. Thouvenel that Her Majesty's Government will not authorize me to attend the Conference, unless it be clearly understood that no other question is to be treated therein than those connected with the affairs of Syria.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

No. 400.

Lord J. Russell to Earl Cowley.

(No. 169.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, February 9, 1861.

THE accounts received from Her Majesty's Commissioner in Syria do not announce any change in the opinion entertained by the Commissioner that

* No. 395.

the French troops ought to be withdrawn at the period fixed by the Convention.

Your Excellency will express this opinion to the Conference as the opinion of Her Majesty's Government. If, however, the Turkish Ambassador has instructions to agree to a prolonged occupation, you will inform Her Majesty's Government of that circumstance. If he has not such instructions, you will not in any way endeavour to persuade him to yield to the desire for a prolonged occupation.

That desire, as expressed by General Beaufort and by the organs of the French press, is founded on an opinion that the Turks are unfit to govern Syria. But the question naturally arises, if Turkish authority is unfit to rule in Syria now, why should it be fit at the end of two months, or of six months?

Again, if it is unfit to rule in Syria, why in Bulgaria or in Bosnia? It is obvious, from what M. Thouvenel says, that this last question will be raised by the Representative of Russia.

Nay more: if it is once admitted that, apart from the horrible events which occasioned the foreign occupation of Syria, the Turks cannot be trusted with the government of Christians, the wide application of this dogma asserted by the Russian Government must be admitted.

Your Excellency is therefore desired to confine yourself to the question of the Convention of September, and, for the reasons I have repeatedly explained to you, to oppose its renewal.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 401.

Lord Bloomfield to Lord J. Russell.—(Received February 11.)

(No. 23.)

My Lord,

Vienna, February 7, 1861.

I AVAILED myself of an interview which I had with Count Rechberg the day after the arrival of the last messenger, to inform his Excellency of the answer which your Lordship had returned to M. Thouvenel's proposal to summon the Conference of the Representatives of the Powers for the purpose of discussing the propriety of postponing the term fixed by the Convention for the evacuation of Syria; and I read to him the copy of your Lordship's despatch to Earl Cowley No. 108 of the 24th ultimo.

Count Rechberg thanked me for this communication, and said emphatically that he approved of every word of this despatch. He did not mention having received any further communications from Paris, but it may be presumed that he is not favourably impressed with the intelligence which has reached him from other quarters on this subject, for he said that England and Austria were the only two Powers that appeared to be agreed on the Syrian question. He added, the answer from Prussia was drawn up so as to leave it uncertain what she will do.

I have, &c.
(Signed) BLOOMFIELD.

No. 402.

Mr. Lowther to Lord J. Russell.—(Received February 11.)

(No. 74. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Berlin, February 9, 1861.

I TOOK an opportunity of asking the Austrian Minister here, Count Karolyi, if he was aware what the opinions of his Government were as to the question of a Conference on the affairs of Syria.

Count Karolyi mentioned the communication of your Lordship's despatch on that subject by Mr. Fane to Count Rechberg, and he read to me a despatch from Count Rechberg, in which he stated that he agreed with the opinions

expressed by your Lordship, and that the Austrian Cabinet would be in favour of the Conference provided the other Powers parties to the Convention were of the same opinion.

If I am not mistaken, the despatch Count Karolyi read to me was addressed to Count Apponyi. No mention was made of Count Rechberg's being of opinion that the occupation should be continued.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. LOWTHER.

No. 403.

Lord J. Russell to Lord Dufferin.

(No. 69.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, February 11, 1861.

I TRANSMIT, for your information, a copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Ambassador at Paris,* reporting what the French Minister for Foreign Affairs had said on communicating to him the substance of M. Bécclard's report of the meeting of the Syrian Commission to receive Fuad Pasha's Report of the result of the trial of the Druses taken at Mokhtarah.

I have informed Earl Cowley that Her Majesty's Government concur with M. Thouvenel in opinion that the execution of one or two of the most criminal of the ringleaders of the Druses will be sufficient to inspire a wholesome fear amongst the rest and to satisfy the ends of justice.

I have likewise communicated these sentiments of Her Majesty's Government to Sir H. Bulwer, and have instructed his Excellency to inform you of them.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 404.

Lord J. Russell to Sir H. Bulwer.

(No. 84.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, February 11, 1861.

I RECEIVED, in your Excellency's despatch No. 70, the plan for the pacification of Syria proposed by the Porte, and the circular which accompanied it.

Her Majesty's Government understand that the Lebanon is not comprised in this plan, because the question of the Government of the Mountain is left to the European Commissioners.

Her Majesty's Government lament that no immediate advance of money to enable the Syrian Christians to rebuild their houses and return to their former occupations, is contained in the Turkish plan.

Your Excellency will instruct Lord Dufferin to remain at his post until the Commissioners shall have made their report.

You will have learnt by my telegram of the 2nd instant that Her Majesty's Government concur with the Turkish Government in thinking that the proposals of the Commission should be confined to the Government of the Lebanon.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 405.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received February 12.)

(No. 215. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Paris, February 11, 1861.

I HAVE at last had some conversation with Vefyk Efendi on the subject of the reassembling of the Conference on the affairs of Syria. He informed me

that he had sufficient instructions to enable him to take part in the Conference, and that he had so stated to M. Thouvenel.

On my asking the nature of these instructions Vefyk Efendi said that he was to request the evacuation of Syria, and to state that it was absolutely necessary, for the re-establishment of the Porte's authority in that province, that the foreign troops should be withdrawn. He should listen, he added, in the first Conference, to any remarks which might be made to him; and probably should have to refer for further instructions to Constantinople.

I observed that he must be aware that the French Government were desirous of prolonging the occupation, and I asked him whether his Government were disposed to acquiesce in this desire. Vefyk Efendi's reply left no doubt upon my mind that the Porte is prepared to extend the period of occupation for a limited period.

I inquired whether the Porte, in consenting to a prolongation of the occupation, intended to take any precautions, with a view of preventing a renewal of the demand when the second period should have expired, and Vefyk Efendi replied that he was satisfied that the troops would be withdrawn before the end of April.

I presume, from what I have recounted, that the French Government have been in direct communication with the Porte upon this subject, and this notion is confirmed by other information which has reached me. Indeed, M. Thouvenel, in the course of a conversation which I had with him this afternoon, said that he had reason to believe that the Porte would not press for the immediate departure of the troops.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

No. 406.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received February 12.)

(No. 216.)

My Lord,

Paris, February 11, 1861.

THE Russian Government has notified its assent to the re-assembling of the Conference on Syrian Affairs, and, M. Thouvenel believes, without any intention to profit by the occasion to bring forward any general resolutions in favour of the Christian subjects of the Porte.

I informed his Excellency that I could not attend a Conference which had any other object than the execution of the Convention of the 5th of September, and that I begged that this might be clearly understood.

M. Thouvenel said that he should be quite ready to oppose any attempt that might be made to involve the Conference in other questions; but he repeated that he had no reason to believe that any such attempt was meditated.

It is probable that the Conference will meet on Saturday, the 16th instant.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

No. 407.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received February 12.)

(No. 217.)

My Lord,

Paris, February 11, 1861.

IN my despatch No. 205 of the 7th instant I called your Lordship's attention to the common opinion which pervaded the public mind in France as to the part which the British Government had taken with respect to the occupation of Syria.

The idea that Her Majesty's Government had been using their influence with the Porte to induce the latter to insist on the withdrawal of the French troops has gained so much ground that I thought it advisable to speak to M. Thouvenel on the subject, and to state to him that, although Her Majesty's Government entertained a very decided opinion upon the expediency of the

evacuation of Syria—an opinion which they had frankly communicated to the French Government—they had not sought in any way to impose that opinion upon the Porte; on the contrary, they had abstained from offering any advice to the Porte as to the course which it should pursue.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

No. 408.

Lord J. Russell to Sir H. Bulwer.

(No. 88.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, February 12, 1861.

I HAVE to inform your Excellency that Her Majesty's Government approve of the note which you addressed on the 30th ultimo to Aali Pasha respecting the withdrawal of the French troops from Syria, of which a copy was inclosed in your despatch to me No. 83 of the 30th of January.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 409.

Lord J. Russell to Earl Cowley.

(No. 173.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, February 13, 1861.

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 215, Confidential, of the 11th instant, reporting the substance of a conversation which you have had with Vefyk Efendi as to the course which he is prepared to take in the approaching Conference upon the question of prolonging the military occupation of Syria.

If Vefyk Efendi takes the line in Conference which he has sketched out to your Excellency, you will take every guarantee that can be obtained for securing the evacuation of Syria before the end of April. The prolongation of the period of occupation should be regulated by a Convention duly signed and ratified.

The number of troops should not exceed the number of European troops actually in Syria in the month of January last.

I have to instruct your Excellency to inform Prince Metternich of the line which you are instructed to take in Conference.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 410.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received February 13.)

(No. 223.)

My Lord,

Paris, February 12, 1861.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 216 of yesterday's date, I have the honour to state that Prince Gortchakoff in his despatch agreeing to the proposal of a fresh Conference on Syrian affairs, says that for his part he must decline to accept the responsibility of the consequences which, in his opinion, must follow the departure of the European troops of occupation before the reorganisation of the Government of the Lebanon.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

Lord J. Russell to Sir H. Bulwer.

(No. 93.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, February 14, 1861.

HER Majesty's Government will instruct Her Majesty's Ambassador at Paris to declare in the Conference that Her Majesty will be prepared to station a squadron on the coast of Syria from the 1st of May of this year till the end of the summer.

You may inform the Minister of the Sultan of this intention, and state likewise that it is proposed to renew the discretionary power given to the Admiral of that squadron to land Marines in the case of urgent danger of massacre of British subjects or of the Christian population.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

Lord J. Russell to Earl Cowley.

(No. 189.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, February 14, 1861.

YOUR Excellency is authorized to declare, in the Conference, that Her Majesty will be prepared to station a squadron on the coast of Syria from the 1st of May of this year till the end of the summer.

I inclose, for your Excellency's information, copy of a despatch which I have addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople upon this subject.*

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

Lord J. Russell to the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty.

My Lords,

Foreign Office, February 15, 1861.

I HAVE received the Queen's commands to signify to your Lordships Her Majesty's pleasure that a squadron of her ships should be stationed on the coast of Syria from the 1st of May of this year till the end of the summer; and I have further to state to your Lordships that a discretionary power should be given to the Admiral of that squadron to land Marines in the case of urgent danger of massacre of British subjects or of the Christian population.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

Lord Dufferin to Lord J. Russell.—(Received February 16.)

(No. 64.)

My Lord,

Beyrout, February 1, 1861.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Lordship's information, copies of further despatches which I have this day addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at the Porte.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, January 29, 1861.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Excellency's information, copy of a list of the Druse men, women, and children that have been murdered by the Christians since the Mountain has been the seat of a joint military occupation.

It is melancholy to think that the intention of Europe should have become the signal for the renewal of those very barbarities we have come to put an end to; and this reflection assumes a graver character when we perceive that in addition to the 136 men who have fallen victims to the spirit of retaliation which not unnaturally animates the Maronites, nearly 50 innocent women and 15 children have been either butchered or brutally ill-treated.

As your Excellency is aware, the moment that the news of the first of these assassinations reached my ears, I wrote a despatch to Fuad Pasha, which I also communicated to the French General, urging upon his Excellency the paramount necessity of at once putting a stop to outrages which if encouraged by impunity must inevitably multiply themselves all over the country; and at the same time I remonstrated most vehemently with my French colleague against the apparent indifference manifested by his countrymen to acts of barbarity perpetrated under the shadow of the French flag.

In reply, I was assured that steps had been taken to put an end to the practices of which I complained; that some of the culprits had been punished; and that there was no danger of any repetition of such crimes. I confess, however, I could never learn that any single individual had been dealt with as he deserved. Since then, vague reports have still kept reaching me, from time to time, of isolated murders committed here and there by the Christians in the Mixed districts. And at repeated intervals I have renewed, both to his Excellency and to M. Béclard, my previous representations.

It was not, however, until Major Fraser accompanied Fuad Pasha to Mokhtarrah that we became acquainted with the real extent to which these atrocities had been practised, and that it was known for the first time how many women and children had fallen victims.

Immediately upon the receipt of this intelligence, I wrote a despatch to Major Fraser, copy of which I have the honour to transmit, requesting him to insist upon Fuad Pasha immediately bringing to justice and convicting in the most summary manner the authors of at least some of the more atrocious crimes marked in the list he sent me, or, in the event of his Excellency showing any disinclination to act with vigour, to require him to give an explanation in writing of his refusal.

Happily, Fuad Pasha at once acceded to the request which had been made to him, and sent persons in pursuit of those most notoriously obnoxious to punishment; and before long I hope to be able to report to your Excellency that they have been duly dealt with.

I cannot, however, conclude this despatch without remarking how unfortunate it is that the misconduct of the Christians should thus confuse the justice of their cause, and compel us to include members of their own faith in the list of those we are called upon to punish.

Had a single culprit been hanged on the day the French army marched to Deir-el-Kamar, not another murder would have disgraced the Christian name.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 2 in No. 414.

LIST of the Druses who have been Killed and Wounded since the Military Occupation of Mount Lebanon.

Villages.	Killed.			Wounded.			Total Killed.	Total Wounded.
	Men.	Women.	Children.	Men.	Women.	Children.		
Beisur	2	..	..	4	1	..	2	5
Ainab	3	..	..	1	3	..	3	4
Aital	3	..	..	2	..	..	3	2
B'shetfin ..	13	2	2	10	..	..	17	10
Kefr Fakud ..	17	1	..	11	..	..	18	11
Derkusheh ..	11	1	1	3	..	..	13	3
Kefr Katia ..	8	..	..	..	..	..	8	..
Kefr Him ..	5	..	4	..	..	..	9	..
Dermik ..	5	..	..	..	..	..	5	..
Jahlieh ..	7	..	..	..	..	..	7	..
Deir-el-Kamar ..	11	9	7	8	..	..	27	8
Kefr Metta ..	1	..	..	..	..	..	1	..
B'tei ..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1
Kefr Nabrakh ..	3	2	..	7	2	..	5	9
Bārūk ..	..	..	..	2	2	..	..	4
B'tulūn ..	4	2	1	3	10	..	7	13
Ain Ozai ..	2	..	..	..	..	..	2	..
Baklin ..	3	..	..	..	..	..	3	..
Ain Bal ..	1	..	..	..	..	..	1	..
Kefr Him ..	1	..	..	..	..	..	1	..
Sinkhamie ..	..	..	..	2	..	..	..	2
Ain Zibdeh ..	5	1	..	5	4	..	6	9
Deir-el-Kamar ..	5	..	..	..	..	..	5	..
Derbabi ..	2	..	..	..	..	..	2	..
B'ahumun ..	1	..	..	..	..	..	1	..
Serahmul ..	1	..	..	..	..	..	1	..
Baruk ..	7	5	..	..	..	..	12	..
Kefr Nabrakh ..	10	2	..	..	..	..	12	..
Derbabe ..	5	..	..	4	..	..	5	4
	136	25	15	63	22	..	176	85

Inclosure 3 in No. 414.

Lord Dufferin to Major Fraser.

Sir,

Beyrout, January 23, 1861.

I BEG to acknowledge the receipt of the nominal list with which you have furnished me of Druse men, women, and children, who have been murdered by the Christians since the Lebanon has been occupied by the Turkish and French troops, and, in reply, I have to request you to urge upon his Excellency Fuad Pasha the necessity of taking immediate steps to bring the authors of such crimes to justice.

Under present circumstances it may, perhaps, be impossible to punish each individual murderer as he deserves, but, at all events, those who have butchered women and infants in cold blood ought to be dealt with by an equally summary process and with the same severity as the Druses.

I have long since had the honour, not only of remonstrating myself with his Excellency upon this subject, but of acquainting him with the indignation felt by Her Majesty's Government on hearing that such excesses were permitted to go unpunished.

Should the Turkish Commissioner hesitate any longer to bring to justice those who have been concerned in some of the most revolting of the cases of murder noted in your lists, perhaps you would request him to give you his reasons, in writing, for refusing to do so, in order that I may communicate them to Her Majesty's Government, and to our Ambassador at Constantinople.

I have, &c.

(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 4 in No. 414.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, February 1, 1861.

AS your Excellency will have already learnt from my previous despatches, as well as from Major Fraser's Reports, Fuad Pasha has been occupied during the last twenty-two days in superintending the proceedings of the Court-martial established in the Mountain for the trial of those Druses designated as the principal actors in the massacres at Hasheya, Rasheya, and Deir-el-Kamar.

Previously to his Excellency's arrival, upwards of 700 persons had been captured in accordance with the requisitions furnished by the Christian Hierarchy, and were awaiting the opening of the assize. To every one's astonishment, however, when the Christian notables were invited to come forward and furnish the Military Tribunal with such indication as would justify the conviction of the persons they had accused, the Turkish authorities were met by a flat refusal, on their part, to supply any evidence whatever.

Subsequent inquiry has satisfied me that this extraordinary conduct was dictated to the notables by their Bishops, with the twofold object of embarrassing the Government, and of preventing the Court from drawing such a distinction between the degrees of individual culpability as would admit of the condemnation of a lesser number than the extravagant total demanded. Having been, for some time past, aware of the unscrupulous methods resorted to by the leaders of the Maronite party to procure the destruction of a far greater number of their Druse enemies than the exigencies of the severest justice could require; and having very little confidence either in the intelligence or the conscientiousness of a military tribunal composed of Turkish officers, when it was a case in which only Druse interests were concerned, I had invited the Commission to restrict the competence of the Court-martial within the narrowest limits, and in addition to the other precautions adopted at my suggestion, it was especially admitted by all my colleagues that the number of executions in the Mountain ought not to exceed that which had been thought an adequate punishment for the still ranker offences of the citizens of Damascus.

When, however, it became apparent that the obstinate silence of the Christians who appeared for the prosecution was likely not only to defeat their own sanguinary objects, but even the ends of justice, I thought it advisable to recommend Major Fraser no longer to insist on so strict an adherence to the restrictions which had been devised to meet an opposite contingency, but to do his utmost to assist his Excellency Fuad Pasha in obtaining such information as would ensure the conviction of the most blood-stained of the offenders. At the same time I sent Mr. Vice-Consul White to Sidon in order to see what evidence could be obtained against the Druses who had slaughtered and pillaged in that locality, and I recommended his Excellency Fuad Pasha, after he should have condemned the principal assassins to death, to retain in prison 100 of the most compromised of the remainder as hostages for the good conduct of their brethren in the Hauran.

Last Thursday the Commission was assembled at the request of his Excellency's delegate, Abro Efendi, for the purpose of receiving the final report of the Turkish Commissioner's proceedings.

As I shall have the honour of forwarding by the next mail a printed copy of the Minute communicated to us upon that occasion, as well as a Protocol of the Conference which ensued between the Commissioners, I will content myself for the present with simply stating that his Excellency informed us that in spite of every exertion to procure satisfactory evidence against the accused, he had only succeeded in obtaining testimony sufficient to procure the capital conviction of twenty individuals; at the same time, however, he begged to forward a list of 270 persons which he had divided, according to the gravity of the evidence against each, into two categories, of which the first contained fifty-seven individuals, of whose greater or less complicity in late events, though there was no proof, yet there was a fair presumption; while the second and larger one was composed of persons whom the few meagre indications he had been enabled to collect, rendered liable to suspicion.

As to the remaining 400 prisoners, there was not a tittle of evidence against them. It was therefore for the Commission to decide what was to be done;

whether in the first place the execution of twenty persons would satisfy the ends of justice, or, if not, whether it would be possible to transfer to the list of those consigned to death any of the names that appeared in the first of the two other categories.

As to the remaining prisoners against whom no testimony was forthcoming, there was no other course open to him but to propose they should be released. Small-pox had broken out in the place where they were confined; several had already died; it was impossible any longer, in consequence of the snow, to supply so large a number of persons with food, and the severity of the weather would soon necessitate the withdrawal of the garrison that guarded them.

A long and warm discussion then ensued between the Commissioners, the French and Prussian Representatives evincing a desire to insist upon a considerable addition being made to the list of those designated for capital punishment, a proposal to which M. Novikow also seemed disposed, though with more reluctance, to accede, while the Austrian Commissioner declared himself more than satisfied with what was already done. As for myself, I ventured to declare that the only difficulty I felt upon the subject arose from the utter want of evidence. Had the question arisen in regard to a large number of persons whose participation in the massacres had been proved beyond all doubt, I should have no hesitation in admitting that 40, 50, 60, nay, 100 of them might be put to death, without doing any extraordinary violence to the dictates of humanity; but that, on the other hand, my mind revolted against the idea of swelling the number of those condemned to die by the addition of names chosen at hap-hazard from a list of persons whose criminality was attested by indications so unsatisfactory as scarcely to justify a presumption of their guilt. I was ready to admit that the number, 20, seemed but inadequate to represent the retribution which justice might demand from the Druses for the slaughter of hundreds of their fellow-creatures, but it was the perverse conduct of the Christians themselves that had defeated the ends of justice. Moreover, it was to be remembered that the Druse nation had been already most cruelly punished for their crimes; that the sufferings they were now undergoing in the Mountain were excessive; their villages had been pillaged, their harvests despoiled, their property confiscated; most of their Chiefs were in prison or in exile, while by the brutal murder not only of upwards of 100 Druse men, but of more than two score of Druse women and innocent children, the Christians had almost forfeited their claims to any further demand for blood. Although, therefore, I was prepared to admit, in reply to the categorical question proposed to us by M. Bédard, that, from a political point of view, it might be desirable to have increased the number of those who were to undergo capital punishment, no considerations of that nature would justify us in forcing the tribunal to do violence to their consciences by condemning to death persons who could not be proved to have in any way participated in the massacres.

These observations, I am in hopes, somewhat modified the previous views of my colleagues, and M. Novikow proposed that in order to escape from the embarrassment in which we found ourselves, his Excellency should be invited to sentence to a lesser penalty those whom it was found impossible to condemn to death. This idea seemed to meet with general acceptance, and it was so completely in accordance with the opinion I had already expressed to Fuad Pasha that I had no difficulty in accepting it, provided it should only be applied to those against whom there was really some tangible proof, as it was impossible to admit that because a man was a priest, because he belonged to a powerful family, because he was vaguely accused by an anonymous enemy, because he possessed "an unprepossessing exterior"—for such were the puerile counts on which a large number were arraigned—that therefore he could be considered compromised.

After some discussion it was agreed that this view of the case should be accepted, and that at the same time that the Commission communicated to Fuad Pasha their opinion that it would have been desirable to have increased the number of capital executions, they were also prepared, in consideration of the difficulties of the situation, to cancel the determination to which they had arrived at a previous meeting, and admit the application of a lesser penalty in all cases where the degree to which the prisoner was implicated, or the extent to which his complicity could be proved, did not admit of the passing of a severer sentence.

A further understanding was unanimously come to by the Commissioners that under no circumstances should the number of those appointed to die exceed fifty, and that all prisoners against whom no testimony was forthcoming might be immediately released.

I think upon the whole your Excellency will see no reason to be dissatisfied with the proceedings of the Commission on this occasion. Notwithstanding that much may be said to excuse the conduct of the Druses, it still remains a fact that they slaughtered in cold blood upwards of 5,000 unarmed men and children. Let the moral guilt attaching to their excesses be extenuated as it may, no penalty which fails to make such an impression as will prevent the repetition of similar atrocities would be adequate to the occasion.

Now there can be little doubt but that with their brutal notions of blood for blood the execution of only some twenty or five-and-twenty individuals would be regarded by the Christians as a delusive display of severity on the part of the Government, and even by the Druses themselves as no serious indication of the displeasure with which their crimes are regarded by Christendom and by their rulers, while each nation would be confirmed in the fatal conviction that so far from the intervention of Europe being likely to give birth to a new era, there remains a probability that the policy which countenanced late events is still likely to inspire the Councils of those who are to conduct the future administration of the country.

Such a result at the present crisis would be very unfortunate. The reputation of Turkish authority is at too low an ebb to admit of any further strain upon its credit, and although by a very delicate adjustment of the abstract merits of the case, it might be reasonably argued that the Druses have already undergone sufficient punishment for their crimes, the process of reasoning that leads to such a conclusion would be too refined and complicated for the appreciation of those with whom we have to deal.

Such considerations are enhanced by the fact that, in agreeing to keep down the executions in the Mountain below the number of those at Damascus, the Commission has shown a greater moderation than I at one time expected. When the subject was first mooted amongst us, M. Bédard talked of hanging upwards of 200 persons; M. de Relhues' lowest figure was 150; and even M. de Novikow thought he evinced great clemency when he recommended that we should keep ourselves within "les centaines." The unanimity of opinion which now seems to prevail among us on this painful subject is very fortunate, for I am most anxious that Fuad Pasha, in dealing with the Druses, should act in concert with the Commission. Had more sanguinary counsels prevailed, I should have felt it my duty, in spite of all opposition, to persist in maintaining my opinion; and if his Excellency had preferred my recommendation to that of the majority, the result would have been productive of many inconveniences.

I cannot conclude this despatch without communicating confidentially to your Excellency my astonishment at finding how little the elemental rules for the administration of justice are understood by my colleagues. As far as I have observed, they seem to me quite unused to the investigations connected with legal proceedings, and to possess but a very inadequate knowledge of the mode in which the sifting of evidence, the cross-examination of witnesses, and the other practices of a tribunal are conducted.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 5 in No. 414.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, February 1, 1861.

WITH reference to my despatch of the 29th ultimo, respecting the murders perpetrated on unarmed Druses since the military occupation of the Mountain, I have now the honour to transmit herewith, for your Excellency's information, copy of a despatch which I have just received from Major Fraser, informing me that, in compliance with my request, as conveyed in my despatch to that officer

of the 23rd ultimo, his Excellency Fuad Pasha has taken active measures to endeavour to bring to justice some of the guilty parties.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 6 in No. 414.

Major Fraser to Lord Dufferin.

My Lord, *Beyrout, January 31, 1861.*

I HAD the honour to receive at Mokhtarah your Lordship's despatch of 23rd January, in which I am requested to call the attention of Fuad Pasha to the necessity for at once bringing to justice the authors of the cruel murders of Druse men, women, and children, of which I had transmitted a list to your Lordship, all of which had been perpetrated by Christians since the occupation of Mount Lebanon by French and Ottoman troops.

The Pasha, whom I furnished with a duplicate list, together with the names of such supposed assassins as I had been able to procure, showed every readiness to meet your Lordship's views, and immediately dispatched an officer in search of the culprits whose names had then been obtained, with orders to make strict inquiries into the details of all murders which had recently occurred, or might occur during the continuance of his present service, with a view to the immediate arrest of the perpetrators.

His Excellency has since received information that the officer in question is upon the traces of the criminals, and there is good reason to believe that at least some of these will shortly be in the hands of the authorities.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. J. FRASER.

No. 415.

Lord Dufferin to Lord J. Russell.—(Received February 16.)

(No. 65.)

My Lord, *Beyrout, February 1, 1861.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 61 of the 18th ultimo I have the honour to transmit herewith, for your Lordship's information, copy of a despatch which I have received from Major Fraser, reporting the further steps taken by his Excellency Fuad Pasha to inquire into the late persecution of Protestants at Nazareth.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure in No. 415.

Major Fraser to Lord Dufferin.

My Lord, *Mokhtarah, January 23, 1861.*

I HAVE the honour to state that I have again brought under the notice of Fuad Pasha the continued misconduct of the Mudir and Cadi of Nazareth, together with the forcible release of the prisoner Michael Gehan as detailed in letters addressed to me under date January 10th and 14th by the Rev. Mr. Zeller of Nazareth.

His Excellency, on my previous demand, communicated to your Lordship in my letter of the 15th instant, had ordered the suspension from their offices of the Mudir and Cadi in question, both of whom he had directed to be sent to Acre, pending a formal inquiry into the whole history of the disorderly proceedings complained of. These steps have, doubtless, been already carried out.

With a view, however, to secure a searching and impartial investigation his

Excellency has now agreed to send to Nazareth an officer of discretion, one of his own Aides-de-camp, for the purpose of conducting this examination, with instructions to transmit directly to his Excellency, and with the least possible delay, a full report upon the whole subject. Before taking any further step regarding Michael Gehan, the Pasha is desirous of being informed whether this man is an Ottoman or a protected subject; as also whether he is now to be found at Beyrout, to which place Mr. Zeller's letter of the 14th instant says he was about to proceed to lay his case before the French Commissioner.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. J. FRASER.

P.S.—Since writing the above I have been informed by Fuad Pasha that the Mudir of Nazareth has been finally dismissed from his post by Achmet Pasha of Beyrout, in consequence of other grave charges against him.

No. 416.

Lord Dufferin to Lord J. Russell.—(Received February 16.)

(No. 66. Confidential.)

My Lord, *Beyrout, February 1, 1861.*

WITH reference to the two assertions made by M. Thouvenel to Lord Cowley, as reported in his Excellency's despatch to your Lordship No. 65 of the 11th ultimo, to the effect that at the unofficial conference held by the Syrian Commission at Beyrout on the 17th of December, all the Representatives, except myself, declared themselves disposed to consider the prolongation of the military occupation of the country, beyond the term fixed by the Convention of Paris, a probable necessity; and that the absence of the Turkish Commissioner from the Conference in question was his own doing, and in consequence of his having declined to attend,—I have the honour to state that his Excellency has been misinformed.

Subsequent conversations with my Austrian and Prussian colleagues have confirmed me in the certainty that the account I forwarded to your Lordship of what took place at the conference in question is correct, and the inclosed extract from a despatch written by my Austrian colleague to his Government on the evening of the day on which the meeting took place, will enable your Lordship to perceive that, if anything, I have understated what fell from M. de Weckbecker and M. de Rehfuß.

It is true, at one moment, when the difference in our opinion on the subject of the occupation had become very apparent, it was proposed by the Representative of Austria that we should embody our collective opinions in a formula which would convey the notion of an apparent unanimity without compromising our individual convictions, by passing a resolution to the effect that the military intervention of Europe ought to cease when the work of repression—that is, the execution of the guilty—shall have been accomplished; but he took care to add, in explanation of the sense he himself attached to his resolution, "This will have been done, long before the time arrives for the withdrawal of the French troops."

In reply, however, I expressly objected, that such a mode of dealing with M. Bécclard's question entailed the very ambiguity it was desirable we should avoid.

It was not a question of coming to an unanimous agreement, by inventing a mode of expression which would admit of opposite interpretations, but of conveying to M. Bécclard, for the information of his Government, our individual impressions. "It is evident," I said, "we disagree. M. Bécclard thinks the troops ought to remain; you are quite of an opposite way of thinking, so am I. M. Novikow supports M. Bécclard's view, and our Prussian colleague seems to consider that it is premature to pronounce a conclusive decision on the subject, though, at this moment, he inclines more to the opinion of the French and Russian Representatives than our own. This expression of opinion is all that M. Bécclard is anxious to evoke, and it is undesirable to search for phrases to embody it in a less precise and individual form."

After such a conversation, it is difficult to conceive that any misapprehension should ensue, yet it is evident that something or other, on the part of my Austrian colleague, has led M. Béclet unwittingly to convey to his Government an erroneous description of what took place.

As to M. Thouvenel's second assertion, relative to Fuad Pasha's refusal to attend the Conference, it is not so easily accounted for. His Excellency has never been invited to attend any of these meetings. There has never been the slightest question of his doing so; on the contrary, they originated in a proposal made, I forget by which of my colleagues, at Damascus, that we might advantageously employ the time Fuad Pasha must be absent in the Mountain, in discussing confidentially with each other the subject of the reorganization of the Lebanon, and I question whether even his Excellency is aware of our holding such assemblies.

To state, therefore, that the Turkish Commissioner was absent from the meeting in question by his own fault, and after he had refused to come, must be the consequence of some singular misapprehension of the facts of the case.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure in No. 416.

M. de Weckbecker to Count Rechberg.

(Extrait.)

LE 17 Décembre, 1860, les Commissaires, à l'exception de son Excellence Fuad Pacha, se sont réunis sur l'invitation de M. Béclet dans une Conférence chez Lord Dufferin.

Le Commissaire Français nous posa la question, si nous croyons nécessaire que les troupes auxiliaires étrangères prolongeassent leur séjour en Syrie au-delà du terme stipulé par la Convention du 5 Septembre. Il nous engagea de délibérer sur ce point, d'échanger nos idées là-dessus, et de nous former, s'il est possible, une opinion unanime sur cet objet. Invité par mes collègues d'énoncer le premier mon opinion, je me suis expliqué de la manière suivante:—

"A teneur de la Convention stipulée entre les Cinq Grandes Puissances et Sa Majesté le Sultan les troupes étrangères ont été envoyées en Syrie pour y co-opérer au rétablissement de la tranquillité. Ce but me paraît être atteint, car nous voyons que l'autorité du Gouvernement Ottoman est raffermie, et que, vu la manière dont Fuad Pacha dirige l'administration et vu le nombre des troupes Ottomanes qui se trouvent dans la province, un retour des tristes événements dont la Syrie a été dernièrement le théâtre n'est plus à craindre. Je ne saurais toutefois méconnaître la forte impression que la présence des troupes étrangères a produite sur la population Musulmane à Damas et l'effet salutaire qu'elle a eu chez les Druses dans la Montagne. Une prolongation de leur présence ne pourrait guère augmenter l'effet produit, et comme la Syrie ne peut pas rester pour toujours occupée par des troupes étrangères, je suis de l'opinion que la durée du terme stipulé n'a pas besoin d'être outrepassé. Du reste j'espère, ajoutai-je encore, que la Commission finira ses travaux avant la fin de ce terme, et qu'elle tombera d'accord d'un projet de réorganisation. Pendant ce temps la présence des troupes étrangères ne saurait qu'être utile pour stimuler les autorités Ottomanes à un déploiement de forces nécessaire pour accélérer les travaux de la Commission."

Après quelques débats sur le plus ou moins de confiance que l'état actuel mérite, on s'accordait dans l'opinion qu'une prolongation du terme stipulé par la Convention pour le séjour des troupes étrangères ne paraît pas nécessaire pour le moment.

No. 417.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received February 16.)

(No. 232.)

My Lord,

Paris, February 15, 1861.

I HAVE the honour to inclose herewith copy of a note from M. Thouvenel, inviting me to attend a meeting of the Conference on Syrian affairs on Monday next the 18th instant, and a copy of my reply thereto.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

Inclosure 1 in No. 417.

M. Thouvenel to Earl Cowley.

M. l'Ambassadeur,

Paris, le 13 Février, 1861.

AYANT reçu l'adhésion de l'Autriche, de la Prusse, de la Russie, et de la Turquie, à la proposition d'une Conférence, et instruit par votre Excellence que le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Britannique y adhère également, j'ai l'honneur de vous inviter à assister à la réunion des Plénipotentiaires le Lundi, le 18 de ce mois, à 11 heures, au Ministère des Affaires Etrangères.

J'ai, &c.
(Signé) THOUVENEL.

Inclosure 2 in No. 417.

Earl Cowley to M. Thouvenel.

M. le Ministre,

Paris, February 13, 1861.

I HAVE had the honour to receive your Excellency's note dated this day, in which you inform me that you have received the assent of Austria, Prussia, Russia, and Turkey, to the proposal of a Conference; and that having been apprized by me that Her Majesty's Government adhere equally to the proposal, you invite me to attend a meeting of the Plenipotentiaries on Monday next, the 18th instant, at 11 o'clock.

Presuming that the Conference has been convoked for the sole purpose of taking into consideration the Convention of the 5th of September last, and being informed by your Excellency that the Porte has no objection to its re-assembling for this purpose—these being the conditions on which I am authorized to take part in it—I have the honour to intimate my readiness to meet yourself, and my colleagues of Austria, Prussia, Russia, and Turkey, on the day and hour specified by your Excellency.

I avail, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

No. 418.

Lord Bloomfield to Lord J. Russell.—(Received February 18.)

(No. 39. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Vienna, February 14, 1861.

WITH reference to Earl Cowley's despatch No. 189 of the 4th instant, in which Her Majesty's Ambassador reports that Prince Metternich appeared to have been told by M. Thouvenel on the authority of the Marquis de Moustier, that Count Rechberg was of opinion that the French occupation in Syria should be continued, I have asked Count Rechberg how it was possible that the French Government could have received so erroneous an impression of his Excellency's opinions on this point.

He replied that he knew not what M. de Moustier had written to his Government, nor had he seen the French Ambassador for some days, but that it would seem that M. Thouvenel was not always very scrupulous in stating what he believed to be the opinion of other Governments on the questions of the day. In the present case M. Thouvenel knew Prince Metternich was without instructions, but the Prince was far too prudent to commit himself in his reply to the

French Minister, and had therefore applied for instructions which had been at once sent to him. Count Rechberg added that about the same time something of a similar kind occurred at St. Petersburg. General Kisséleff reported that Austria adopted the French view of the Syrian question, and Count Thun, on hearing this from Prince Gortchakoff, inquired of Count Rechberg the truth of the story, which he doubted, as it was in contradiction to the instructions which he just received from Vienna.

"This is the way," said Count Rechberg, "that business is sometimes done in Paris, and," he added, "they have been at work at Berlin also," for the telegraph had just brought a report from thence that Austria and Prussia were agreed with Russia and France on the question of renewing the Convention.

Of M. de Moustier it may be fair to say that he possibly informed his Government, as the result of his conversation with Count Rechberg on the proposal to reassemble the Conference, that the Austrian Government agreed to the proposal, on the principle that it could be convoked, for the discussion of a question of deep interest to the Powers, whilst M. Thouvenel appears to have interpreted this communication in a sense it was never meant to convey.

I have, &c.
(Signed) BLOOMFIELD.

No. 419.

Lord Bloomfield to Lord J. Russell.—(Received February 18.)

(No. 41.)

My Lord,

Vienna, February 14, 1861.

WHEN I was with Count Rechberg yesterday, I inquired if he had sent to Prince Metternich, the instructions for that Ambassador's guidance at the approaching Conference on the affairs of Syria. His Excellency replied that they were gone, and that a copy of them had been forwarded to Count Apponyi, and the French expression which he used to explain their nature, was that they were "très larges."

I read to Count Rechberg your Lordship's despatch No. 130 of the 30th ultimo, and he thanked me for this communication, and said that he was pleased to hear the arguments contained in this instruction to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Paris, and that nothing whatever had occurred to produce any modification in the opinion which he had originally given respecting the reassembling of the Conference to discuss the question of the Convention of the 5th of September, which, he observed, had at the same time been most accurately reported by Mr. Fane.

Count Rechberg added that some voluminous reports from Beyrout had arrived, but that he had not yet had time to read them.

I have, &c.
(Signed) BLOOMFIELD.

No. 420.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received February 18.)

(No. 243.)

My Lord,

Paris, February 17, 1861.

I HAVE the honour to inclose copy of a note received yesterday evening from M. Thouvenel, deferring the Conference on Syrian affairs from Monday to Tuesday.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

Inclosure in No. 420.

M. Thouvenel to Earl Cowley.

M. le Comte,

Paris, le 16 Février, 1861.

LE Conseil des Ministres devant se réunir dans la matinée de Lundi, je me suis obligé de remettre à Mardi deux heures la réunion de la Conférence. Je

me plais à espérer que vos convenances personnelles vous permettront de vous rendre à cette nouvelle convocation.

Agréez, &c.
(Signé) THOUVENEL.

No. 421.

Lord J. Russell to Earl Cowley.

(No. 203.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, February 19, 1861.

YOUR Excellency will have received from me by telegraph the instructions by which Her Majesty's Government desired that your conduct should be guided in the Conference on Syrian affairs appointed to be held to-day.

You will have seen by those instructions that Her Majesty's Government are of opinion that the presence of the French troops in Syria, instead of securing the peace of the country, serves to encourage the Maronites to attack the Druses, and to retaliate, by the murder of Druse men, women, and children, the wrongs inflicted on the Maronites at the commencement of the outbreak in the course of last summer.

But Her Majesty's Government, as you will have seen, anticipating the possibility of the Turkish Plenipotentiary being willing to consent to the prolongation of the stay of French troops in Syria until the end of April, were content in that case, and on the clearly expressed ground that the season of the year was unfavourable for the re-embarkation of the troops on an exposed coast, to agree in the concession made by the Porte's Representative, although desiring that the occupation of the country during this extended period should be restricted to the sea-coast.

The great object of Her Majesty's Government is, as I explained to your Excellency, to prevent the continuance of the state of things which, from Lord Dufferin's reports, now prevails in Syria, and to save the Druse population from becoming victims to the atrocities which the Maronites are too ready to exercise against them.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 422.

Lord Dufferin to Lord J. Russell.—(Received February 20.)

(No. 67.)

My Lord,

Beyrout, February 10, 1861.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Lordship's information, copies of further despatches which I have addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at the Porte.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 422.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, February 3, 1861.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Excellency's information, copy of the Protocol of the nineteenth sitting of the Syrian Commission, held on the 19th ultimo.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Report of the Nineteenth Meeting of the Syrian Commission, held at Beyrout, January 19, 1861.

LE Samedi, dix-neuf Janvier, mil huit cent soixante-un, tous les Commissaires, à l'exception de Fuad Pacha, représenté par Abro Efendi, étant réunis à Beyrout sous la présidence de Lord Dufferin, Vice-Président, la séance est ouverte à deux heures. Les procès-verbaux des deux séances précédentes sont lus et adoptés avec quelques modifications.

Abro Efendi, revenant sur les questions examinées dans la précédente séance, expose ce qui suit :—

Les renseignements qu'il a pu recueillir, depuis la séance du 9 Janvier, le mettent en mesure de développer la pensée du Plénipotentiaire Ottoman sur les divers incidents qui ont marqué cette séance.

Il commence par revenir sur la conversation qui a eu lieu dans la précédente séance, avant son ouverture, au sujet du licenciement des garnisons de Hasbeya, Racheya, Deir-el-Kamar, et Damas. Cette mesure n'a pas, dit-il, dès le début de la Mission du Haut Commissaire du Sultan, manqué d'occuper son attention, quoique, ainsi qu'il a été dans le cas de le déclarer précédemment, les Chefs seuls fussent coupables, et que les officiers subalternes et les simples soldats ne fussent pas individuellement responsables des actes des officiers supérieurs, auxquels ils étaient tenus d'obéir. Aussi les bataillons qui avaient fait partie de ces garnisons ont-ils été dissous, et s'ils n'ont pas pu être immédiatement renvoyés de la Syrie, c'est qu'il a fallu les remplacer par de nouvelles troupes, et réorganiser cette partie de l'armée d'Arabie, dans un moment opportun, et en sorte que le licenciement n'affaiblisse point la force dont dispose le Plénipotentiaire, et qui lui a été jusqu'ici indispensable pour s'occuper de la question fort importante de la pacification du pays qui, dès son arrivée, a occupé plus particulièrement son attention. Mais aujourd'hui le moment de réaliser cette pensée étant arrivé, Fuad Pacha est en correspondance avec le Ministère de la Guerre pour la mise à exécution de la mesure du licenciement.

Quant à la présence d'un détachement de troupes Ottomanes à Abadié qu'on a considéré comme contraire au règlement du Mont Liban, la Commission doit savoir que ce village se trouve dans le district Mixte de la Caimacamie Chrétienne, et qu'il ne peut dans les circonstances actuelles échapper, pas plus que les villages Mixtes, à l'action militaire qui seule peut maintenir le bon ordre entre deux populations naturellement hostiles. Abro Efendi cite à cette occasion la présence d'un détachement Français à Hamana, l'envoi de troupes Ottomanes dans tous les districts Mixtes pour faire des arrestations. Si l'autorité Ottomane avait porté un changement dans l'organisation de la Caimacamie, et si elle avait exercé une ingérence quelconque dans les affaires administratives de cette partie de la Montagne, il y aurait certes alors violation du règlement ; mais rien de pareil n'a eu lieu. L'autorité locale, seul responsable aujourd'hui de la tranquillité du pays, a dû et doit encore prendre toutes les mesures nécessaires pour maintenir le bon ordre, et empêcher notamment tout conflit dans un district composé de Chrétiens et de Druses. Si le conflit, prévenu par l'envoi d'un détachement de troupes à Abadié, était arrivé sans cet envoi, qu'aurait pensé la Commission, et n'aurait-elle pas fait peser la grave responsabilité qui en serait dérivée sur l'autorité locale ? Ainsi c'est dans ce seul but que la mesure a été prise, et provoquée même par l'avis de Youssouf Bey Karam qui s'était empressé de signaler dans ses propres lettres des intrigues et des rassemblements des Druses. Abro Efendi croit avoir dit dans la précédente séance que le détachement de troupes en question serait retiré d'Abadié, dès que les inquiétudes qui se sont produites de part et d'autre dans ce district auraient cessé. Aujourd'hui que ces inquiétudes ont diminué, et que le Caimacam se croit en mesure de déclarer sous sa responsabilité qu'il n'y a pas lieu de craindre des troubles qu'il saura sans doute prévenir, en s'adressant en cas de nécessité à l'autorité locale pour requérir une force supplémentaire, Abro Efendi déclare que l'autorité Ottomane, ainsi qu'elle en a déjà donné l'ordre, retire elle-même son détachement de troupes, mais il ne cesse de maintenir le droit de cette autorité à occuper, dans les circonstances exceptionnelles que nous traversons, toute partie de la Montagne où la tranquillité lui paraîtrait être compromise. Ce droit ne saurait souffrir aucune contestation du moment où elle est responsable du maintien du bon ordre. Appuyé sur ce droit,

le Délégué Ottoman conclut que la Mission Plénipotentiaire ne se croit pas dans l'obligation de demander l'avis de la Commission, toutes les fois qu'il faut agir dans le sens de la conservation de la tranquillité dans le pays.

Abro Efendi revient ensuite sur l'accusation qui a été portée que, lors des dernières arrestations des Druses, 500 coupables ont pu échapper. Tout le monde connaît, dit-il, la promptitude avec laquelle des masses de Druses ont été saisis sans coup férir par les troupes du Sultan. En une seule journée, c'est-à-dire le 23 Décembre, 949 individus, appartenant à la première et à la deuxième catégorie, ont été arrêtés dans deux cercles dans l'intervalle de quelques heures. La Commission connaît aussi l'entente qui a eu lieu dans cette circonstance entre Fuad Pacha et le Général de Beaufort, au sujet de l'établissement d'une ligne d'observation depuis Kab-Elias jusqu'à Djoubdjenin. Le Délégué Ottoman fait remarquer que personne ne saurait prétendre qu'aucune Druse requis par la justice n'ait échappé à l'action militaire, et que les arrestations en masse, difficiles dans une ville, sont infiniment plus difficiles sur une Montagne comme le Liban. Il renouvelle donc ses protestations contre ce qui a été dit de la conduite tenue par les autorités Ottomanes dans cette affaire, et le seul fait qu'il croit devoir constater, c'est que des Druses en fuite sept ont été arrêtés par la ligne d'observation du Général, 80 par celle des troupes Ottomanes établies au-delà de Djoubdjenin, et 20 par les détachements placés du côté du Hauran.

D'après les dernières nouvelles qu'Abro Efendi a reçues de Mokhtarrah, la situation dans ce village est celle-ci : Les Chrétiens font preuve d'un mauvais vouloir qui paraît puiser sa source dans une arrière-pensée. Ils s'obstinent à refuser leurs dépositions, en se bornant à déclarer seulement qu'il n'y a pas de Druse qui ne soit coupable, et qu'ils n'ont d'autres dénonciations à faire que celles qui sont portées par le fait même de la confection des listes présentées. Cités à différentes reprises devant le Tribunal de la Montagne, ils se sont abstenus de faire des déclarations ou d'indiquer des témoins, soutenant que tout ce qu'ils avaient à dire était borné aux listes. Les exhortations du Plénipotentiaire pour les amener à éclaircir la marche de la justice ont été inutiles. Les notables ont demandé l'autorisation de quitter Mokhtarrah, et à l'heure qu'il est, ils doivent être de retour à Beyrout. En présence de ce mauvais vouloir des Chrétiens, il ne reste qu'à établir les différentes catégories des coupables Druses, en prenant pour base les données générales des listes, et les renseignements que le Tribunal de Mokhtarrah pourra fournir ou posséder. Le Plénipotentiaire du Sultan, loin de reculer devant une tâche si difficile, ne rentrera à Beyrout qu'après avoir accompli sa mission. Un compte-rendu de ces travaux parviendra au Délégué Ottoman. En attendant, il y a, parmi les prisonniers de Mokhtarrah, dix-huit individus compris dans la liste des Chefs Druses de Beyrout ; six individus condamnés déjà par contumace par le Tribunal Extraordinaire de cette ville ; et plus de 250 qui figurent sur la liste des notables, comme instigateurs, chefs de bandes, et assassins individuellement.

En terminant, Abro Efendi exprime à la Commission le vif plaisir avec lequel le Plénipotentiaire du Sultan donnera, au nom de Sa Majesté Impériale, une marque de satisfaction à chacun de ceux des Musulmans de Damas qui ont bien mérité du pays et de l'humanité, et qui ont été déjà signalés à son attention. Quant à Salih Agha Mouhayeni, le Gouverneur-Général de Damas n'a rien écrit jusqu'ici à l'égard de ce vieillard, qui vient d'être, encore une fois, très vivement recommandé à la bienveillance toute particulière d'Emin Pacha.

Il semble résulter des termes de cette communication que le retrait des troupes d'Abadié n'a été ordonné que parce que leur présence n'y était plus jugée nécessaire. M. Bédard ne peut admettre, pour son compte, une telle interprétation des faits. Selon lui, les troupes ont été retirées, parce que leur présence à Abadié était illégale, et en conséquence des protestations qui s'étaient élevées dans le sein même de la Commission à la précédente séance. M. le Commissaire Français verrait plus d'un inconvénient à ce que le caractère de la mesure dont il se déclare d'ailleurs pleinement satisfait, fût dénaturé.

M. Novikow observe que les circonstances invoquées par Abro Efendi, comme justification rétrospective de l'envoi des troupes Ottomanes à Abadié ne sauraient remplir l'objet qu'il s'est proposé. Le village d'Abadié fait, il est vrai, partie des districts Mixtes, mais il est situé dans un des districts Mixtes de la Caimacamie Chrétienne où le pouvoir établi par les règlements n'a pas cessé de fonctionner. On ne peut donc le considérer comme étant soumis aux mêmes conditions que les districts Mixtes de la Caimacamie Druse, laquelle est, par suite

des circonstances exceptionnelles, administrée par des autorités Ottomanes. En outre, pour que l'occupation du village d'Abadié fût légale, il aurait fallu : 1. Que Youssouf Bey Karam en fût positivement la demande ; 2. Que la nécessité de l'occupation fût bien établie. Or, cette demande n'a pas été faite, et Ahmed Pacha, s'étant rendu à Abadié avant l'occupation, avait pu juger par lui-même que l'intervention des troupes Ottomanes dont il reconnaît aujourd'hui l'inutilité était loin d'être nécessaire.

M. de Rehfues est d'avis que la question de légalité a été suffisamment examinée dans la précédente séance, et que l'occupation du village d'Abadié ayant cessé, toute discussion relative à cet incident demeure sans objet.

Lord Dufferin est plus que personne d'avis que le rappel des troupes Ottomanes ayant eu lieu, la discussion n'a plus d'intérêt pratique. Mais en principe, il lui semble très juste de considérer tous les districts Mixtes comme soumis aux mêmes conditions, car, dans tous ces districts, les chances de collision sont exactement les mêmes. Ahmed Pacha a pu craindre que les mouvements qui s'étaient produits à Abadié ne dégénérassent en lutte sanglante, et pour ne pas encourir le reproche fait à son prédécesseur il a dû intervenir avec promptitude. Le retrait des troupes doit satisfaire aujourd'hui toutes les exigences, mais en principe, M. le Commissaire Britannique ne saurait admettre de son côté que, là où des troupes étrangères peuvent résider à titre d'auxiliaires, celles du Souverain, qui constituent la garantie principale du maintien de l'ordre, n'aient pas un droit au moins égal d'occupation.

M. le Commissaire d'Autriche partage l'opinion de Lord Dufferin sur la légalité de la présence des troupes Ottomanes partout où il pourrait y avoir des troupes Françaises ; mais il regrette que, dans la circonstance dont il s'agit, on n'ait pas fait appel en même temps aux troupes de la Turquie et à celles du corps expéditionnaire.

M. le Commissaire Français repousse l'analogie que Lord Dufferin voudrait établir entre des troupes envoyées en Syrie par l'Europe entière pour garantir la sécurité des populations Chrétiennes, sauvegarder leurs privilèges contre toute atteinte, et des troupes dont la seule présence à Abadié était une violation de ces mêmes privilèges. Il fait observer que l'envoi de détachements Français sur certains points des districts Mixtes de la Caimacamie Chrétienne, tels que Zahlé et Hamana, a été motivé par le besoin urgent de porter secours aux habitants, et que, bien loin de provoquer la protestation des autorités et la démission du Caimacam, leur présence a été bénie par la population.

M. Novikow remarque que l'occupation des districts Chrétiens par les troupes Françaises a eu, dès le principe, un caractère plutôt philanthropique et charitable que militaire. Les soldats étaient employés à la reconstruction des maisons. Leur envoi d'ailleurs dans le Meten et à Zahlé avait eu la sanction préalable et collective de la Commission, qui, ayant à se faire représenter par des délégués dans les Comités de reconstruction des villages Chrétiens, a choisi ces délégués parmi les officiers du corps expéditionnaire.

Sans vouloir rentrer dans la discussion relative à la présence des troupes Françaises en Syrie, dont le caractère est explicitement réglé par une Convention internationale, Abro Efendi soutient que, tant que la responsabilité du maintien de l'ordre dans le Liban incombe à l'autorité Ottomane, cette autorité a le droit incontestable d'envoyer des troupes partout où la tranquillité semble compromise.

M. le Commissaire Français donne lecture d'une lettre de M. le Général Commandant-en-chef du corps expéditionnaire au sujet des habitants de Djezzîn. Selon M. le Général de Beaufort et d'après les renseignements qui lui ont été fournis, il serait urgent de faire droit à la requête que les habitants de Djezzîn viennent d'adresser simultanément à tous les membres de la Commission.

M. de Rehfues appuie la requête des habitants de Djezzîn. Aucun secours ne leur ayant été donné, leur misère, dit-il, est extrême, et la mort a fait parmi eux, dans ces derniers temps, encore plus de victimes que les massacres.

M. Novikow émet le vœu qu'un détachement du corps expéditionnaire soit envoyé dans le Djezzîn, et mis à même de concourir à la reconstruction des maisons détruites.

Abro Efendi fait observer que la nature des plaintes, formulées par les habitants de Djezzîn, n'est pas précisée, mais il promet de recommander à Fuad Pacha l'envoi dans ce village d'un de ses Aides-de-camp pour faire une enquête sur la véritable situation des plaignants.

M. Bécclard communique à la Commission les renseignements qui lui ont été

fournis par le Commandant de la station navale Française, touchant la situation de la ville et des environs de Tripoli.

MM. les Commissaires reconnaissent d'un commun accord la nécessité de mesures propres à rétablir la sécurité dans ce pays. Ils signalent particulièrement à l'attention du Gouvernement un certain Ali Bey, ancien Mudir de Merdji Aïoun, qui, par sa conduite et son langage, jette la population Chrétienne de son district dans une alarme continuelle.

Abro Efendi déclare que les derniers rapports reçus par le Gouvernement, ne mentionnent aucun des faits communiqués par M. Bécclard, sauf ce qui concerne Mehmed Bey el Mehmed, contre lequel diverses accusations ont été portées. M. le Délégué Ottoman transmettra toutefois à son Excellence Fuad Pacha les renseignements et observations qui viennent d'être faites touchant la situation de Tripoli et de Merdji Aïoun.

La séance est levée à cinq heures.

(Suivent les signatures.)

Inclosure 3 in No. 422.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, February 5, 1861.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Excellency's information, copy of the Protocol of the twentieth sitting of the Syrian Commission, held on the 24th ultimo.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 4 in No. 422.

Protocol of the Twentieth Meeting of the Syrian Commission, held at Beyrout, January 24, 1861.

LE vingt-quatre Janvier, mil huit cent soixante-un, tous les Commissaires, à l'exception de Fuad Pacha, représenté par Abro Efendi, étant réunis à Beyrout sous la présidence de Lord Dufferin, Vice-Président, la séance est ouverte à midi et demi.

Abro Efendi expose que les ordres pressants qu'il a reçus de Fuad Pacha dans la matinée l'ont obligé de proposer à la Commission de se réunir aujourd'hui même pour recevoir communication du résultat des opérations du Tribunal de Moktara. Les instructions du Délégué du Plénipotentiaire Ottoman lui enjoignent en outre de demander à la Commission, séance tenante, un avis concluant sur la résolution finale que son Excellence sent la nécessité de prendre dans un bref délai, afin que la répression n'éprouve plus de retard. Le Délégué Ottoman donne ensuite lecture de la dépêche qu'il a reçue de Fuad Pacha dont il demande l'annexion au procès-verbal, et dépose entre les mains de M. le Vice-Président : (1), le texte du Rapport émané du Tribunal de Moktara ; (2), une liste de 290 coupables de première catégorie, divisée en trois classes dont la première comprend 20 accusés que le Tribunal propose condamner à la peine de mort ; la seconde 57 accusés ; et la troisième 210, sur le sort desquels il n'est pas statué.

Fuad Pacha, dans la lettre dont il a été donné lecture, fait appel aux lumières de la Commission pour savoir quelle serait la limite la plus convenable à apporter à la répression. Il rappelle que Lord Dufferin a proposé, dans une précédente séance, que le chiffre des condamnations à mort prononcées contre les Druses soit inférieur à celui des condamnations du même genre prononcées contre les Damasquins. Si cette proposition est agréée par la Commission, Fuad Pacha pense que le chiffre de 20 condamnations, déjà prononcées par le Tribunal de Moktara, et de 23 par le Tribunal de Beyrout, total 43, sera probablement considéré par la Commission comme suffisant. Toutefois il sollicite de la part de la Commission à ce sujet l'expression d'un avis catégorique.

M. le Commissaire Britannique s'empresse de remarquer qu'en faisant la susdite proposition, il n'avait en vue que les condamnations sommaires du

Tribunal de Moktara. Celles qui ont été déjà proposées ou prononcées par contumace par le Tribunal de Beyrouth contre les Cheiks Druses, ne devaient pas dans sa pensée entrer en ligne de compte dans la proportion à établir entre les condamnations de Damas et celles de la Montagne.

Après lecture du cahier contenant la liste des 290 accusés et de l'exposé sommaire des charges qui pèsent sur eux, MM. les Commissaires expriment chacun tour à tour leur opinion touchant la question qui leur est soumise.

M. de Weckbecker remarque que la culpabilité du plus grand nombre des 290 accusés de Moktara est loin d'être prouvée rigoureusement, mais qu'il y a de fortes présomptions qu'ils sont tous coupables. Dans l'impossibilité où il semble que l'on soit de les punir tous, M. le Commissaire d'Autriche pense que 30 à 40 condamnations à mort seraient un exemple suffisant.

M. le Commissaire de France déclare qu'il lui en coûte beaucoup d'avoir à émettre une opinion en pareille matière, et surtout dans les circonstances présentes. Selon lui, la Commission avait fait tout ce qu'il était en son pouvoir de faire, en établissant, il y a déjà plus de deux mois, que les jugements des plus coupables d'entre les Druses serait sommaire, et que le Plénipotentiaire Ottoman devait se borner à punir de mort les organisateurs du massacre, les Chefs et bandes, et les assassins les plus sanguinaires. En établissant ces trois catégories de coupables, tous également passibles de la peine capitale, la Commission avait, par ce seul fait et dans une pensée d'humanité, restreint dans de justes limites le châtiment mérité, il faut bien le dire, par la presque totalité des Druses. M. Bédard, pour son compte, avait consenti volontiers à borner ainsi l'œuvre de la justice, mais il ne lui conviendrait, sous aucun rapport, de partager la responsabilité qui incombe tout entière au Plénipotentiaire Ottoman, soit en fixant exactement le chiffre des condamnations à mort, soit en entrant dans le détail des opérations confiées au Tribunal de Moktara. Son Excellence Fuad Pacha semble aujourd'hui vouloir se départir de cette responsabilité. Il est évident qu'il éprouve de l'embarras à condamner à mort des individus sur lesquels pèsent les plus graves inculpations, mais qui, pour la plupart, échappent par le défaut de preuves à une condamnation en règle. M. le Commissaire Français se rend facilement compte de cet embarras, mais ce n'est pas aujourd'hui que l'avis de la Commission peut aider Fuad Pacha à en sortir. S'il avait été consulté, il y a quatre mois, alors M. le Commissaire Français aurait conseillé à Fuad Pacha de procéder immédiatement aux arrestations, de ne point donner aux principaux coupables le temps de fuir dans le Hauran, de ne point s'aliéner le témoignage des victimes, en leur inspirant confiance par des mesures de réparation sans cesse ajournées. L'avis de la Commission, alors demandé et suivi, eût en effet prévenu des difficultés devant lesquelles Fuad Pacha se trouve arrêté. Toutefois M. le Commissaire de France répondra, dans la mesure de son pouvoir et selon sa conscience, à l'appel qui lui est adressé, ainsi qu'à tous ses collègues. Il a remarqué que, dans la liste des 290 accusés de Moktara, beaucoup d'entre ces individus avaient avoué leur crime. Ceux-là sans exception, selon M. le Commissaire de France, doivent être condamnés, ainsi que ceux contre lesquels pèsent les plus graves accusations, de telle façon pourtant que le chiffre des condamnations à mort prononcées à Moktara ne dépasse pas celui des 80 condamnations prononcées à Damas.

M. de Rehues ne croit pas que la Commission doive partager en rien la responsabilité qui pèse sur le Plénipotentiaire du Sultan. La Commission a naguère tracé la marche, c'était à Fuad Pacha qu'il appartenait de la suivre. M. le Commissaire de Prusse verrait de l'inconvénient à ce que la Commission fixât aux condamnations à mort un chiffre même approximatif, et se prononçât sur le degré de la culpabilité des prévenus, car la conséquence d'une telle immixtion dans l'œuvre de la justice serait évidemment pour elle un partage de responsabilité. Il croit seulement pouvoir en thèse générale exprimer l'opinion que les individus qui sont coupables d'avoir assassiné des femmes, des prêtres, ou des enfants, méritent la mort.

M. Novikow, après avoir fait remarquer que la demande posée par Fuad Pacha se réduit à une simple question de chiffre, rappelle que la Commission a déjà décliné précédemment toute fixation de ce genre. Elle ne peut pas davantage substituer son action à celle des Tribunaux pour déterminer le degré de la culpabilité des prévenus dont la liste vient de lui être communiquée. Elle n'aurait, pour éclairer sa conscience, que des indications vagues et insuffisantes. M. le Commissaire Russe renouvelle donc à son tour toutes les réserves déjà

faites par ses collègues de France et de Prusse; mais il croit devoir proposer à la Commission l'abandon du principe de l'unité de peine qu'elle avait elle-même posé dans la dixième séance, avant qu'il ne fut question de proportionner le chiffre des condamnations de la Montagne à celui des condamnations capitales prononcées à Damas. Alors il n'était question que des principaux coupables, tous également passibles de la peine capitale. Aujourd'hui la Commission est appelée à se prononcer sur le compte de 290 individus qui, pour la plupart, ne rentrent pas dans les trois catégories de grands coupables établies par la Commission. En conséquence M. Novikow croit que pour ceux-là il serait juste d'adopter subsidiairement le principe d'une pénalité secondaire.

M. le Commissaire Britannique ne croit pas que l'on doive attacher une grande importance au chiffre des condamnations. Ce qui importe avant tout, c'est qu'un innocent ne soit pas puni comme s'il était coupable, c'est que le crime soit prouvé. Lord Dufferin ne saurait admettre en aucune façon qu'un Druse soit condamné si l'on n'a pas la preuve ou la conviction morale de sa culpabilité. Dans la liste qui vient d'être lue, il y a des individus dont la culpabilité est affirmée par cela seul qu'ils passent pour avoir été, par exemple, à Zahlé, ou bien parce qu'ils sont dénoncés comme coupables, ou, plus sommairement encore, parce qu'ils sont derviches ou notables. Une justice rendue sur de tels dispositifs serait tout bonnement ridicule et odieuse, et provoquerait l'indignation du monde civilisé. Lord Dufferin a consenti à ce que la procédure du Tribunal de Moktara fût expéditive, cela est vrai; mais il n'a pas entendu par là que ce Tribunal se départirait des règles observées même par les cours martiales de l'Europe. En conséquence, M. le Commissaire Britannique serait d'avis que la Commission ne prit aucune résolution susceptible d'engager le Plénipotentiaire Ottoman à punir d'une peine quelconque un individu dont la culpabilité ne serait pas démontrée par des preuves morales ou matérielles bien concluantes.

Abro Efendi déclare que le Plénipotentiaire Ottoman ne recule point devant la responsabilité qui lui incombe, et qu'il ne désire faire partager à ces collègues que dans la mesure des lumières qu'ils pourront lui fournir pour éclairer sa marche. Il constate en outre que les débats qui viennent de suivre sa communication n'aboutissent à aucune opinion arrêtée qui puisse être utile au Plénipotentiaire. Ce que le Délégué Ottoman réclame instamment, c'est un avis collectif sur l'objet de sa communication.

En conséquence de cette demande et après en avoir de nouveau délibéré, MM. les Commissaires décident, séance tenante :—

Qu'au point de vue politique, le nombre de vingt condamnations à mort, proposées par le Tribunal de Moktara, n'est pas suffisant.

Tout en adhérant à l'expression de cette pensée collective, Lord Dufferin revient sur la nécessité où il se trouve de dégager sa responsabilité au point de vue judiciaire, et il déclare que dans sa pensée la Commission ne peut, en vue d'un résultat politique, inviter les juges à faire passer dans la première catégorie de coupables des individus dont la culpabilité ne serait pas prouvée.

Il est reconnu ensuite unanimement par la Commission :—

Qu'il y aurait lieu d'appliquer une peine inférieure, telle que celle de la déportation, à ceux d'entre les 290 individus compris dans la liste de Moktara qui n'auront pas été condamnés à la peine de mort, et dont la culpabilité serait reconnue par le Tribunal.

Abro Efendi promet de transmettre cet avis collectif au Plénipotentiaire du Sultan, et ajoute qu'aucune charge sérieuse ne pesant sur les 409 accusés de la deuxième catégorie, ils vont être immédiatement mis en liberté.

Abro Efendi, ayant reçu l'ordre de diriger sur Moktara les Chefs Druses dont le procès a eu lieu à Beyrouth, demande à la Commission si elle se trouve en mesure d'émettre un avis collectif sur les sentences du Tribunal Extraordinaire de Beyrouth. Pour assurer la simultanéité des exécutions, il faudra, dit-il, que ces détenus soient envoyés à la Montagne.

La Commission ayant répondu qu'elle ne se trouve pas encore en mesure d'émettre un avis sur les dossiers, dont la traduction n'est pas achevée, et s'étant ainsi opposée à l'éloignement des prisonniers Druses de Beyrouth, le Délégué Ottoman s'empresse de faire remarquer qu'en présence de cette objection le Plénipotentiaire devra surseoir aux exécutions, si le principe de la simultanéité des exécutions est maintenu.

Des opinions diverses ayant été échangées à ce sujet, la Commission croit

devoir laisser au Plénipotentiaire Ottoman la latitude de procéder immédiatement aux exécutions des condamnés de Moktara, ou d'y surseoir pour les ordonner simultanément avec celles des condamnés de Beyrouth.

M. Novikow appelle l'attention de la Commission sur le Hauran, où la répression, commencée par le Tribunal de Moktara, aurait causé une certaine effervescence. D'après les renseignements qui lui sont parvenus, un Sheik Druse, nommé Abou Abdi, parent mais ennemi d'Ismail Atrach, aurait promis de veiller à la sécurité des Chrétiens du Hauran, à la condition d'être muni d'un sauf-conduit pour aller à Damas. Cet individu est recommandé par Faris Amir et par les Chrétiens eux-mêmes. A ce propos M. Novikow émet de nouveau le vœu que des mesures efficaces et sérieuses soient prises contre le Hauran.

Abro Efendi promet de signaler à l'attention du Haut Commissaire l'individu cité par M. Novikow, et d'informer d'ailleurs son Excellence, dès ce soir, de la latitude qui lui est laissée relativement au sursis des exécutions. Le Délégué Ottoman ajoute que ce sursis lui paraît inévitable, vu la fermentation des esprits dans la Montagne, et l'inconvénient qu'il y aurait à procéder en deux fois aux exécutions.

La séance est levée à cinq heures et demie.

(Suivent les signatures.)

Annex.

Fuad Pasha to Abro Efendi.

Monsieur,

Mokhtarah, le 24 Janvier, 1861.

A MON arrivée à Mokhtara, le Tribunal Extraordinaire que j'avais institué d'office, avait déjà commencé ses travaux, en procédant aux interrogatoires des Druses et autres détenus, au nombre d'environ 800, écroués dans les prisons de ce chef-lieu.

La plupart des accusés s'étant renfermés obstinément dans une complète négation des faits qu'on leur imputait, et ne voulant avouer leur présence durant les événements que dans des endroits où ils étaient allés se battre sans fournir d'autres données sur leurs crimes, l'interrogatoire auquel ils ont été soumis n'a pu amener aucun résultat sérieux. Pour éclairer plus positivement la conscience des juges, et recueillir des renseignements précis et détaillés qui devaient amener une distinction entre les coupables et établir différentes catégories de sentences à rendre, je convoquais les membres Chrétiens des Conseils des Districts et quelques notables pour les inviter à donner les renseignements requis par le Tribunal, que la liste qu'ils m'avaient remise à Beyrouth présentait sous un caractère trop général, en ne portant les dénonciations qu'en masse, et en n'en fournissant pas suffisamment contre chaque individu. Lorsque le Tribunal leur demanda de formuler leurs dénonciations sur chaque accusé, ils s'abstinrent de le faire, prétextant que les notables qui se trouvaient à Beyrouth étaient plus à même de satisfaire la conscience des juges. En conséquence j'ai renouvelé à ces derniers l'invitation que je leur avais faite avant mon départ de Beyrouth de venir à Mokhtara. Après quelques jours d'hésitation qui ont retardé la marche du grand procès de la Montagne, ils arrivèrent ici. Avant leur comparution devant le Tribunal, je les ai reçus moi-même, et je les ai engagés dans les termes les plus encourageants à faire leurs dépositions, en formulant des dénonciations et en fournissant les renseignements qu'ils pouvaient avoir sur les crimes des détenus qui figurent dans la liste qu'ils m'avaient présentée. Ils me répondirent qu'ils avaient déjà fait leurs dénonciations en masse dans la liste susmentionnée; qu'ils n'avaient aucune réclamation à faire contre les particuliers, mais bien contre la masse des Druses; qu'ils se bornaient à soumettre à la justice le contenu de cette liste, et qu'ils refusent de fournir d'autres explications. Interrogés par le Tribunal sur le même sujet et invités à lui donner au moins les renseignements qu'ils avaient dû recueillir pour leur servir de base à dresser la susdite liste, ils lui tinrent le même langage et évitèrent par des réponses évasives à satisfaire aux demandes du Tribunal qui, voulant éviter tout malentendu, s'est vu obligé de leur adresser des questions par écrit, auxquelles ils ont répondu de la même manière. Ci-joint vous trouverez copie de ces demandes et réponses.

Dans l'espoir de leur faire entendre raison, je les ai réunies de nouveau chez moi, et j'ai tâché de leur donner l'assurance qu'il n'avaient à craindre, en faisant ces déclarations, de s'attirer quelque responsabilité vis-à-vis de ceux qui avaient quelques réclamations à faire, puisque nous ne les consultons pas à titre de représentants de la population, mais comme de simples particuliers dignes de confiance et capables de formuler des renseignements sur les accusés dont ils avaient présenté la liste, et que nous n'admettions pas de partie civile dans ces procès, attendu que la société était offensée par les crimes des Druses, et que le Gouvernement Impérial se constituait lui-même partie réclamante. Je leur ai également déclaré que la liste susmentionnée ne présentant pas des données suffisantes sur les crimes des accusés, il était difficile d'établir d'une manière équitable les degrés de culpabilité, et partant le degré de condamnation encourue par chaque individu; que les dénonciations en masse étant portées contre un nombre très-considérable d'individus, elles ne pouvaient pas être entièrement prises en considération, et que ce serait dépasser les bornes de la justice que de frapper d'une même peine les chefs et les subordonnés. Les têtes qui doivent tomber, leur ai-je dit, sont celle des hommes qui, par leur position sociale, ont exercé une funeste influence sur la masse, ou qui, par le nombre et l'atrocité de leurs crimes, ont blessé le plus l'humanité; que de cette manière le nombre des condamnations serait limité à un chiffre que la conscience publique du monde civilisé pût admettre, et que dépasser cette limite serait rendre la justice aussi cruelle que le crime même. Je leur ai aussi expliqué que les condamnations dont nous frapperons les Druses seront d'une nature qui puisse leur servir d'exemple salubre, mais qu'elles ne doivent et ne peuvent être faites dans un but d'extermination, et que les Chrétiens abandonnant toute idée de vengeance individuelle, doivent se pénétrer de ce sentiment, que dans les punitions nous ne cherchons que le bien de la société.

Les notables Chrétiens ne parurent pas convaincus de ces paroles, et persistèrent dans leur refus; ils proposèrent seulement de recueillir des renseignements et les dénonciations individuelles des Chrétiens contre les Druses, si on leur donnait le temps matériel pour les obtenir. Cette proposition n'a pu être prise en considération, parce qu'elle changeait la forme du procès que j'avais adoptée d'accord avec la Commission Européenne, et menaçait de retarder à l'infini les jugements que nous voulons rendre aussi sommairement que possible. N'ayant rien pu obtenir par la persuasion, et ayant à peu près perdu une semaine en pourparlers sans résultat, je leur ai accordé, sur leur demande, la permission de s'en retourner chez eux, pour ne pas être taxé de les retenir malgré eux ici pour obtenir des déclarations forcées.

Le Tribunal Extraordinaire, n'ayant donc pu avoir d'autres bases pour se guider dans ses jugements que la liste présentée par les notables Chrétiens assermentés, suivant l'assurance que nous a donnée le clergé, ainsi que les déclarations que les Druses ont faites par devant le Tribunal Extraordinaire de Beyrouth et quelques autres données, a dû se servir de ces trois éléments d'indication pour obtenir les degrés de culpabilité. Il a d'abord classé les détenus en deux catégories générales. La première porte tous ceux qui, d'après ces trois indications, le Tribunal présume être les plus coupables. La seconde renferme les noms des détenues qui sont accusés seulement par la liste des Chrétiens ou arrêtés en dehors de ces listes, sans qu'il y ait d'autres preuves ou indications sur leur culpabilité.

Le Tribunal Extraordinaire de Mokhtarah m'a remis avec son rapport un Tableau, indiquant pour chaque individu de la première catégorie son nom, le lieu de son domicile, s'il est notable, ainsi que l'accusation portée sur la liste des Chrétiens, l'instruction sommaire de son procès et l'opinion du Tribunal sur sa culpabilité. Pour faciliter la recherche des plus coupables, après avoir placé au premier rang des numéros les noms des individus qui, non seulement par leur position, mais aussi par la force des indications, se trouvent sous une grande prévention, il en forme encore trois classes. D'après ces indications la première contient 20 individus, la deuxième 57, et la troisième 210; la seconde est plus coupable que la troisième.

Voilà le résultat quoique imparfait, mais consciencieux des travaux de notre Tribunal Extraordinaire qui, entouré de tant de difficultés, n'a pu obtenir des renseignements pouvant donner des témoignages plus à charge et éclairer la justice. L'instruction qui lui a été donnée de mener sommairement les procès, le refus des Chrétiens de faire des dépositions, la dénégation absolue des crimes

par les accusés, et l'impossibilité d'admettre leurs co-religionnaires comme témoins à décharge, ont rendu la tâche de ce Tribunal aussi difficile qu'ardue.

On peut désigner par son travail les individus qui doivent subir la peine capitale, si un nombre est fixé et si tous les inculpés qui se trouvent dans la première catégorie ne doivent pas la subir. Je sais d'avance qu'il répugne à tout le monde de dire qu'il faut exécuter un tel nombre d'individus. On a semblé croire que la justice elle-même pouvait en indiquer le chiffre; mais la nature de la chose même nous force, malgré nous, à prendre une décision pour mettre fin à une situation dont la prolongation est et serait pernicieuse à ceux au nom desquels nous voulons faire justice, et à ceux qui se trouvent sous le coup d'une accusation générale. Il faut donc se prononcer sur la condamnation d'une partie de ceux qui se trouvent, par l'ordre de leur degré de culpabilité, au premier rang des accusés. Si une motion faite au sein de la Commission Européenne par M. le Commissaire de Sa Majesté Britannique était adoptée, le chiffre des exécutions devrait être inférieur à celles de Damas. Comme indépendamment des individus qui ont été fusillés à Damas, les nombre des exécutés appartenant à la classe civile est de 52 individus, dans la prévision que cette proportion serait acceptée par la Commission, un nombre entre 40 et 50 serait le chiffre de ceux que la justice doit frapper de la plus grande sévérité. Onze Druses jugés à Beyrouth dont les procès-verbaux rogatoires ont été communiqués à la Commission, ainsi que 6 autres condamnés dont les procès-verbaux rogatoires n'ont pu encore lui être soumis, forment un total de 17 personnes. En y ajoutant 6 individus condamnés par contumace qui sont tombés entre les mains de la justice, ce nombre se trouve réduit aujourd'hui à 27 par suite des 6 arrestations susmentionnées. En ajoutant à ce nombre les 20 individus qui sont indiqués dans la première classe de la première catégorie, le chiffre des condamnations arriverait à 43 individus.

La Mission Impériale ne voulant se montrer ni faible ni cruelle dans l'accomplissement de sa tâche, a cru devoir recourir à l'appui bienveillant de la Commission pour s'éclairer par ses lumières. Elle prendra en considération ses observations pour diminuer ou pour augmenter le nombre de condamnés à mort, et toutes ses remarques sur leur culpabilité. Si l'énormité de leurs crimes exige d'un côté une trop grande sévérité, de l'autre plus de 150 Druses assassinés par les Chrétiens après les événements, et 1,200 individus tués pendant la guerre civile, comme ils le soutiennent, doivent entrer dans la balance de la justice. Aussitôt que j'aurai l'avis de la Commission, je sanctionnerai les rapports des tribunaux, et les condamnés de la Montagne, ainsi que ceux qui se trouvent à Beyrouth, seront dirigés pour subir leurs condamnations dans les différentes localités, théâtres de leurs crimes, ou dans les villages auxquels ils appartiennent, pour que leur triste fin serve d'exemple salutaire aux autres.

C'est immédiatement après ces exécutions que l'amnistie, ou pour mieux dire la cessation des poursuites judiciaires, sera promulguée, suivant l'entente qui a eu lieu au sein de la Commission, pour les parties du pays dans lesquelles la justice a eu son cours.

Si la Commission ne se trouve pas satisfaite du degré d'éclaircissements que le Tribunal a obtenus et qu'elle désire voir une instruction plus détaillée, il faut élargir les détenus qui sont de la seconde catégorie, et diriger ceux de la première à Beyrouth pour les juger individuellement. La détention prolongée de 800 individus dans une localité comme Mokhtarah nous paraît de toute impossibilité sous tous les rapports.

En vous envoyant le Tableau de la première catégorie avec une liste de tous ceux qui seront condamnés à la peine capitale, ainsi que la liste générale de la deuxième catégorie et le Rapport du Tribunal, je vous prie de les communiquer immédiatement à la Commission, en lui donnant en même temps lecture de la présente, et de me faire savoir sans retard le résultat de ses délibérations.

Agréez, &c.
(Signé) FUAD.

Inclosure 5 in No. 422.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrouth, February 11, 1861.

IN confirmation of an opinion I have already ventured to express to your Excellency, to the effect that the Christian population of the Lebanon are almost, if not quite, as savage as any of their non-Christian neighbours, I beg to transmit to you copy of a petition addressed to me by the wife of a Sheikh of the Khazin family, who, as your Excellency will perceive by a short notice appended to its foot by Mr. Vice-Consul Rogers, has been lately murdered in the most brutal manner by his Christian co-religionists of the Kesrouan.

The very fact that so terrible a crime should be attempted to be hushed up sufficiently indicates the state of society which prevails.

I also take this opportunity of forwarding to your Excellency the substance of some remarks of Bishop Butros, which have been also noted down, for my information, by Mr. Rogers, illustrating the lawless condition of every part of the Lebanon.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 6 in No. 422.

Substance of the Petition from the Mother of Milhem Khazin to Lord Dufferin, dated January 14, 1861.

YOUR Lordship is aware that the property of our family has been pillaged, yet I am more unfortunate than others in that my husband has been killed, and I, with my orphan children, am left without any means of subsistence.

I petitioned Fuad Pasha, who, about five months ago, ordered me 300 piastres per month, but I have only received one payment.

Being in great distress, and having no one to apply to save God Almighty and your Lordship, I pray that you will assist us in any way that you may deem expedient.

N.B.—The petitioner has property in many villages of the Kesrouan, but is unable to recover the proceeds. Her late husband, Sheikh Daibis Fayad el Khazin, of the village of Ghûsta, in the Kesrouan, went to the Patriarch, and was there informed, in answer to his inquiries, that his Excellency Fuad Pasha had issued orders for the restoration of his family to their homes and their rights.

The Patriarch gave him an order for the recovery of some of his dues in the village of Râashin. On his approach to that village, the people of Ashkut, upwards of 100 in number, seized and tortured him. They stripped him, and dragged him on the ground by a rope round his neck. They placed him in an oil-press, and pounded him till his bones were broken. The people of Ghûsta came, and carried the mutilated body to their village, where it was buried.

It is, moreover, stated that the Patriarch has placed an anathema on all who shall give evidence upon this subject, or in any way favourable to the Khazin family; but some people of Deir-el-Kamar, Zahleh, and Beyrouth, happened to be present, and are willing to give their evidence.

This statement was made to me by a member of the family, and confirmed by others.

(Signed) E. T. ROGERS.

Inclosure 7 in No. 422.

Vice-Consul Rogers to Lord Dufferin.

My Lord,

Beyrouth, January 23, 1861.

I HAVE the honour to state that last evening I had the pleasure of meeting Bishop Butros, of Jezzin, at the house of Yussuf Bek Keram.

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I found the Bishop an exceedingly intelligent person, and I was much interested in the observations he made. He stated that, in his opinion, the incitement to and cause of all the misfortunes with which this country has of late been afflicted, is the non-punishment of crime. He stated that, exclusive of the blood shed in open civil warfare, between the years 1841 and 1858, or in other words during the space of seventeen years, 780 individual murders have been committed in Mount Lebanon; and that probably since the year 1858 upwards of 300 more have occurred, thus forming a total of about 1,100 in the space of nineteen years, not one of which has been avenged by law.

The Bishop further stated that the great evil amongst the native Christians is, the want of education amongst the women. He declared that the Druses, as a body, are far more enlightened and civilized than the Christians, and that this arises from the simple fact that their women are educated, they being admitted into the religious assemblies, when even the uninitiated of the men would not be allowed to attend.

The Druse children thus imbibe a certain amount of culture from their mothers.

Considering that these facts might be interesting to your Lordship, I have taken the liberty of submitting them.

I have, &c.
(Signed) E. T. ROGERS.

No. 423.

Lord Dufferin to Lord J. Russell.—(Received February 20.)

(No. 68.)

My Lord,

Beyrout, February 10, 1861.

FOR the last ten days the Commissioners have been occupied in discussing among themselves some of the various combinations which have been proposed for the future administration of the Lebanon, in connection with a larger scheme for the re-organization of the province, upon which it has been agreed we shall engage as soon as the more pressing subject of the Mountain shall have been disposed of.

I need not weary your Lordship with a description of the various conversations I have had separately with each of my colleagues, or with all of them together. It will be sufficient if I state that the language which has been lately held by the French Commissioner has given me reason to believe that he is no longer disposed to join with me in the equitable plan for the settlement of the Mountain, and the preservation to each section of its inhabitants of an equal share in the advantages we had originally designed for them, but is determined to accept no settlement short of something that shall extend and perpetuate the domination of the Maronite element over every other neighbouring tribe and sect.

As I have already informed your Lordship, I attribute this change in M. Bécclard's sentiments to instructions which he has lately received from home, and which I conceive to have been inspired by the military representatives of the Emperor's Government at present at Beyrout, between whom and the French Commissioner no very cordial feeling appears to exist.

That M. Bécclard's present opinions are widely different from those which a few weeks back he professed to entertain is very apparent from the fact of his endeavour to recur, as he has done of late at several of our meetings, to the dynastic principle of a Shehab Emir, after having assured me that he was willing to assimilate the administration of the Mountain to that of any other Pashalic of the province, provided only the person appointed to it were a Christian, no matter of what sect or nation, as set forth in the Articles agreed upon by the Commissioners for the basis of their future deliberations.

Several other indications having convinced me that, however liberal in appearance might be his proposals, my French colleague was bent on changing our project into something very different from what we had originally intended, I determined, without further delay, myself to draw up a sketch for the future government of the Lebanon on the principles I have already had the honour of submitting to your Lordship's consideration in my despatch of the 1st ultimo to Sir H. Bulwer, in the hopes that a plan conceived in a spirit of conscientious impartiality would, at all events, meet with the approbation of a

majority of my colleagues. Such, I am happy to say, has been the case; and I now forward the first ten (initialled) Articles of a Memorandum, which is to serve as the groundwork of our Report on the future re-organization of the Mountain.

Your Lordship will perceive that the first Article designates the Governor of the Lebanon as a "Christian (sujet de la Porte) dépendant du, &c;" but, as it was become necessary, after M. Bécclard's manifest desire to introduce a Maronite ascendancy, to leave no doubt in the minds of our Governments as to the real interpretation put upon the clause by those who agreed to it, I ventured to introduce a reserve to the effect that the individual in question must not be a native of the province. My example was followed by my colleagues of Russia, Prussia, and Austria; and it has thus become the manifest opinion of four out of five of the members of the Commission that, under no circumstances should the Administration of the Mountain be entrusted to a Shehab or to a member of the Maronite race. The Turkish Commissioner is of the same way of thinking; and so strong are the convictions of all my colleagues on the subject that the Austrian and Prussian Representatives openly declared that they would prefer a Turk to a native Christian.

The only other points that can become the subject of any serious discussion, are those connected with the composition of the Medjlis, and the circumscription of the compartments into which it may be advisable to divide the Mountain.

The Representative of France seems inclined to advocate whatever arrangement will throw as much power as possible into the hands of the Maronite majorities. As such a result would be fraught with mischief and injustice, it will be necessary to insist strongly on the administrative independence—one of another—of the various nationalities which compose the population of the Lebanon, as well as to institute a system of Mixed Medjlis for the Mixed districts, on equitable principles. Articles IV and VII seem to me already sufficiently to assert and to protect the interests of the minorities, Christian and non-Christian; and I have little doubt but that when we come to settle the actual composition of the respective Councils, the result will be equally satisfactory.

Your Lordship will perceive that M. de Rehfuës has added a further reserve regarding the person of the Governor of the Lebanon, to the effect that the Porte must come to an understanding with the Representatives of the Five Powers with respect to the individual they select.

This addition seems to me, if not ill-advised, at all events ill-timed; but my Prussian colleague has always desired to assign a more important part to the political Agents of the European Governments than I would wish. It seems to me that their direct interference with the government of the country is an impossible, and if possible would be a disastrous, expedient. The action of such Representatives should be confined to the exercise of a simply moral influence on the mind of the Governor-General, and it would be most unwise, in my opinion, to give to their representations, even though conveyed in a collective form, any constitutional force. It will be quite enough that they are there, with the power of communicating their views in whatever manner they may consider most effectual. The responsibility of disregarding these remonstrances will be sufficiently great to ensure the Governor-General paying them due attention, except on such occasions when the very fact of his having acted contrary to their desires will be a proof that he was justified in doing so.

In a few days we shall have the whole of the *procès-verbal* of the trials of the Turkish Pashas and Druse Sheikhs in our hands. It is only the difficulty of getting the original Turkish translated that has so long delayed their communication to the Commission. The painful duty of pronouncing an opinion upon the inferences drawn by the Tribunal of Beyrout from the proceedings recorded in these documents once concluded, the sentences will be passed, and all those implicated in the late massacres, whether in the Mountain or at Saida, will be executed simultaneously. This sad event may be expected to take place within ten days.

Within the same period I am in hopes our Report on the Lebanon will be concluded, and the chief portion of the labours of the Commission terminated.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure in No. 423.

Réserves Particulières.

NON indigène de la province (réserve de Lord Dufferin).

(Signé) D. & C.

Non indigène; sur le choix duquel la Porte devra s'entendre avec les Représentants des cinq Puissances (réserve de M. Rehfuës).

(Signé) R.

Non indigène (réserve de M. de Weck-becker).

(Signé) W.

Non indigène (réserve de M. Novikow).

(Signé) N.

Indigène (réserve de M. Béclard).

(Signé) L. B.

Articles Collectifs.

1. UN Gouverneur Chrétien, pour toute la Montagne, dépendant du . . .

2. Territoire du Liban sera maintenu dans ses anciennes limites, sauf les rectifications jugées nécessaires.

3. Abolition du régime de deux Caimacamies, et des Mokatas.

4. Division du Liban en un certain nombre de circonscriptions administratives, renfermant, autant que possible, des éléments homogènes; c'est-à-dire, appartenant au même culte.

5. Abolition du système féodal, et des privilèges qui s'y rattachent.

6. Egalité de tous devant la loi.

7. Garanties judiciaires et administratives identiques, pour toutes les communautés habitant le Liban.

8. Séparation du pouvoir administratif et judiciaire.

9. Institutions au siège du Gouvernement d'un Medjlis administratif, et d'un Medjlis judiciaire, formant l'un et autre le degré supérieur de juridiction.

10. Il y aura dans chaque circonscription un Medjlis administratif, et un Medjlis judiciaire, de première instance.

(Suivent les paraphes.)

N.B.—To be continued at next meeting of the Commission.

No. 424.

Lord J. Russell to Earl Cowley.

(No. 204.)

My Lord,

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 254 of the 19th instant, reporting what had passed in the Conference on Syrian affairs, and I have to acquaint your Excellency that Her Majesty's Government entirely approve the language which you held on that occasion.

Foreign Office, February 21, 1861.

Her Majesty's Government have only to impress upon your Excellency the instruction conveyed to you by telegraph, and repeated in my despatch No. 203 of the 19th instant, not to agree to any prolongation of the French occupation beyond the 1st of May. An agreement to prolong the stay of the European troops till some undefined and undiscovered organization of the Mountain has been completed, would, probably, lead to a foreign occupation as long as that which has taken place in the Roman States.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 425.

Lord J. Russell to Earl Cowley.

(No. 205.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, February 21, 1861.

YOU will see by Lord Dufferin's despatch No. 68 dated the 10th February, a copy of which is in your possession, that he expected that, within ten days, the execution of the Druses engaged in the massacres would take place. He was in hopes that within the same period the Report of the Commissioners on the Lebanon would be concluded, and the chief portion of the labours of the Commission terminated.

Your Excellency will see, therefore, that a prolongation of the European occupation to the 1st of May ought to be amply sufficient, in point of time, for that organization of the Mountain upon which M. Thouvenel so strongly insists.

If, however, it is meant that the wished-for organization is to be delayed till the Representatives of Austria, Great Britain, Prussia, and Russia have yielded to the exclusive Maronite supremacy, ten years may elapse before that submission is obtained.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 426.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received February 21.)

(No. 252. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Paris, February 19, 1861.

I WAS with M. Thouvenel yesterday afternoon, when, after some conversation on other matters, his Excellency, alluding to the Conference on Syrian affairs which is to take place to-day, asked me if I had seen Vefyk Efendi lately, adding, that M. de Lavalette had reported that the Porte was anxious that its Representative should come to an understanding with him (M. Thouvenel) and me relative to a prolonged occupation of Syria by the troops of France.

I replied, that I had not seen Vefyk Efendi for some days, but that in the last conversation which I had had with him, he had informed me that he was instructed to insist on the evacuation at the period fixed by the Convention of the 5th of September, and that if any difficulties were made he should refer again to his Government.

The French Government, I continued, was aware of the opinions of Her Majesty's Government based on the Reports of the British Commissioner in Syria; but I could at the same time assure his Excellency that Her Majesty's Government had offered no advice to the Porte, being desirous that the Sultan, as an independent Sovereign, should exercise his own free discretion as to the necessity or not of availing himself of the further presence of European assistance in Syria. I had not, therefore, in any way attempted to influence the conduct which Vefyk Efendi might think it right to pursue.

M. Thouvenel replied, that he thought that the Porte was willing to enter into a compromise, and that he conceived that the best course which Vefyk Efendi could take in the interests of his Government would be, to say that as there might be difficulties in the way of the immediate evacuation of Syria on

account of the season of the year, and as the Commission assembled at Beyrout had not yet concluded its Report, it was advisable that the Conference should adjourn for the present.

If, said his Excellency, I would join him in making this recommendation to Vefyk Efendi, he had no doubt that the latter would act upon it.

I replied that I would not take upon myself to offer any such advice, which would in my opinion be next to recognizing the permanent occupation of Syria. I was ready to admit that during the month of March and beginning of April there might be difficulties attending the embarkation of troops in the open roadsteads of the coast of Syria; but I could never advise that the evacuation of that province should depend on the termination of the labours of the Beyrout Commission.

The determination of any one single member of that Commission to refuse his consent to what his colleagues might think reasonable, would suffice to prolong the occupation indefinitely. Besides, I maintained that the occupation must cease, unless it were to be prolonged by a fresh Convention.

M. Thouvenel rejoined, that there was no reason why the Commission should not be shortly ready with its Report, and a new Government be installed in the Lebanon. He repeated that the Emperor was most desirous to bring his troops home; but that His Majesty felt that to do so in the present disorganized state of the Mountain would be to take upon himself the responsibility of any disorder that might occur after their departure; and let me not deceive myself, a fresh massacre in Syria could not be met by palliatives. It would at once raise the question of the continuation of the Turkish Dynasty in the East. But this responsibility which His Imperial Majesty would not assume for himself he was ready to make over to a Government duly recognized and installed. The Sultan would then be master of his own destinies.

Plausible as is this argument, I would not accept it as conclusive, and I observed to M. Thouvenel that it was doubtful whether the prolonged stay of foreign troops was not calculated to produce the very dangers which he expressed himself to be anxious to avoid. The longer they remained, the greater would be the pretensions of the Maronites, the deeper the exasperation of the Druses, while the Turkish authority would daily lose in prestige.

Besides, Her Majesty's Government had been informed that the Turkish Government recognized the arrangement of 1845 to be still in force in the Lebanon. It could not be said, therefore, that the country was without a Government. No doubt there must always be danger of hostile collisions in a country inhabited by so many hostile races as was Syria, but those dangers would not be less six months hence, or six years hence, than they were now.

Desirous, however, of ascertaining the bottom of M. Thouvenel's thoughts, without compromising myself, I said that I saw no practical conclusion in the course which he had suggested. Supposing the Conference to be deferred, something must be done with regard to the Convention which expired in a few weeks. What course did his Excellency propose to pursue in regard to it? M. Thouvenel's answer convinced me that his sole object was to obtain a release from his present engagements, with complete latitude of action for the future; that is to say, that the only engagement which he would be willing to contract for the future, would be that the troops should be withdrawn whenever a new Government should be installed in the Lebanon.

Seeing that no further discussion would be of any avail, I said to M. Thouvenel that we should hear in Conference what the Porte had to say, and I took my leave. I should add, however, that more than once during this conversation, his Excellency admitted that, if some fresh arrangement were not made by the Conference, the French troops must be withdrawn at the period fixed by the Convention.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received February 21.)

(No. 253. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Paris, February 19, 1861.

AFTER the conversation yesterday with M. Thouvenel recounted in my preceding despatch, I called upon Prince Metternich, who had expressed a desire to see me. I informed my Austrian colleague of what had passed between the French Minister and myself, and I said that M. Thouvenel's language had left a very painful impression upon my mind of the bad faith of the French Government.

I here showed him, as directed by your Lordship's instructions, your despatch No. 173 of the 13th instant, and I stated that I was anxious to come to some understanding with him upon the course we both should pursue in Conference, as I was glad to find that his Government concurred entirely in opinion with Her Majesty's Government.

Prince Metternich replied that no doubt the two Governments were agreed on the question of principle, and he was instructed not to oppose the Turkish Representative, if he insisted on the evacuation of Syria by foreign troops at the period fixed by the Convention. Still his Government could not positively affirm that that evacuation might not be followed by fresh disorders; that it was in the power of the French Agents to produce them, and that he must, therefore, warn the Turkish Plenipotentiary of the responsibility he would incur, were the evacuation to be enforced before the Lebanon had a Government capable of maintaining order.

The Austrian Government, moreover, the Prince continued, were, in their present critical position, obliged to consider their relations with France, and to avoid taking any step which would bring upon them the renewed enmity of the French Emperor. His instructions, therefore prescribed to him to favour any compromise which the Porte might be willing to accept, and indeed to endeavour to act as a medium to bring conflicting opinions together: complete latitude was left him in this respect.

The Prince did not conceal from me his own decided aversion to place himself in antagonism to the French Government. He said that the question of Syria was as nothing, in his estimation, to the interests of his own Government, and indeed to those of the Porte, both of which he thought would be compromised by pushing matters to extremities. From a conversation which he had had with Vefyk Efendi, he believed that such was also the opinion of the Turkish Representative, who was ready to consent to a prolonged occupation of Syria.

I replied that Prince Metternich would have seen by the instructions which I had shown him, to what limits I was empowered to go; but his Excellency replied that he did not think that M. Thouvenel would engage that Syria should be evacuated by the 25th of April. I said that although my instructions were positive on that point, yet that if I could feel any confidence that by prolonging the term a little, the object we all had in view, namely, the positive evacuation of Syria, would be effected, I would take upon myself to refer again to your Lordship; but that unfortunately after the conversation which I had just had with M. Thouvenel, I could not give, as I could not entertain, any assurance of the kind. Prince Metternich seemed to think that the French Government were not asking too much in insisting on the installation of a settled Government in the Lebanon before the withdrawal of their troops, and he asked whether some middle term might not be adopted by the Conference; for instance, that half the troops should be withdrawn, and the remainder concentrated upon the coast, while instructions might be sent to the Commission to hasten the new organisation of the Lebanon. He was ready to propose such a plan, if there was any chance of its being accepted.

I expressed my conviction that M. Thouvenel would not consent to any compromise of the kind, and for myself I said that I had a decided objection to admitting any connection between the object sought to be attained by the Convention of the 5th September, and the task entrusted to the Commission. I argued, moreover, either that a new Convention must be signed, or that the present must be executed.

The conversation continued for some time in this strain, Prince Metternich admitting that no reliance could be placed upon the French Government, but arguing that it was better to let them have their way in this question than to oppose them. Finally, he said that he was to see M. Thouvenel in the course of the evening, and that he would call upon me before the meeting of the Conference.

In the course of the night I received Sir H. Bulwer's telegram of yesterday informing me of the final instructions sent to the Turkish Representative, and this morning early I saw Vefyk Efendi.

It required but a few minutes to ascertain that although he would not actually originate any scheme of arrangement, he was quite prepared to accept any proposal that would meet with the consent of the other members of the Conference. In fact, I gleaned from him that a proposition of the following nature would meet with his consent—the occupation to be prolonged to the 1st of June, the Commission being in the meantime requested to hasten its proceedings.

Vefyk Efendi was evidently not aware that I was in possession of his instructions, for on my observing to him that he was exceeding them, he showed surprise and perhaps a shade of vexation. I said that I thought he would do wisely to keep to them in the first instance, to insist on the evacuation by the 1st of May, making the uncertainty of the weather an excuse for the prolongation of the term of occupation; not to mix up the question of the Commission with the question of occupation; and above all things to require, that whatever fresh arrangement might be made, should be sanctioned by a Convention. Upon this latter point I observed there could be no doubt, for that no resolution adopted by the Plenipotentiaries in Conference could overrule a solemn engagement contracted between their Sovereigns.

Vefyk Efendi said that he would follow the course which I had recommended, although he would have preferred an immediate settlement of the question at issue without much discussion. He knew, however, positively, he added, that M. Thouvenel would enter into no engagement binding him to the evacuation of Syria by the 1st of May. He was equally certain that the French Minister would accept the 1st of June, because there could be no doubt that within that period the new organization of the Lebanon would be completed.

After this conversation I had to consider what course I should take. Had there been time I should without doubt have referred to your Lordship. One thing was clear, that the Porte did not mean to insist on immediate evacuation. Of this M. Thouvenel was informed. Was he equally aware of the extension of the period of occupation to which the Turkish Representative was ready to consent? I could not tell, but probably he was.

I determined, therefore, in proposing to Prince Metternich a mode of action which, if successful, would compromise the Porte as little as possible. The Prince came to me shortly afterwards. He said that his interview with M. Thouvenel had been so unsatisfactory that he was resolved not to mix in the discussion at all, but to let matters take their course; that on suggesting the immediate withdrawal of half the troops of occupation, and the concentration of the remainder on the coast, M. Thouvenel had replied that all should come away, or that all should remain, and that the coast was too unhealthy for the location of troops. He had shown, moreover, a decided intention of insisting that the troops should continue in Syria until after the installation of the new Administration of the Lebanon.

I said that I had not expected any other answer from M. Thouvenel, and that, as it seemed that the occupation must be prolonged inasmuch as the Porte was prepared to consent to it, the question was, how to put an end to it with certainty at the earliest possible moment. As he (the Prince) had said that he was not only authorized but desired to aid in any compromise, I suggested that the following course should be pursued by us. The Turkish Plenipotentiary would, he had informed me, request, when the Conference met, that the Convention of the 5th of September should be carried into execution, but without the intention of persisting in his request. A discussion would arise, and I proposed, when the proper moment should arrive, to observe that Her Majesty's Government were of opinion that all necessary security could be given, if the troops of occupation were withdrawn from Syria, and allied squadrons sent to the coast. The Prince might then ask at what period they could be there, and on my replying, towards the end of April or the beginning

of May, he might find a proposal that the troops should be withdrawn at that period, their departure being ensured by a fresh Convention.

Prince Metternich agreed to take this course, but he at the same time expressed his conviction that it would not satisfy M. Thouvenel.

I said that M. Thouvenel would find it difficult to resist so reasonable a proposition, and that at all events it was worth trying.

I am aware that I have somewhat exceeded my instructions in taking this course, but I trust that your Lordship, seeing the difficulties by which I am surrounded, and that I am, in fact, the only Plenipotentiary really willing to withstand the pretensions of France, will not altogether disapprove my proceedings.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

No. 428.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received February 21.)

(No. 254.)

Paris, February 19, 1861.

My Lord,

THE Conference on Syrian affairs reassembled this afternoon at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the Representatives of the Five Great Powers and of the Porte were present.

M. Thouvenel opened the proceedings by referring to the despatch which he had addressed to the Emperor's Representatives at the Courts of the said Powers on the 18th ultimo; and he recapitulated in a few words the substance of that despatch, with a view of eliciting the opinions of the assembled Representatives. He addressed himself, in the first instance, to the Turkish Ambassador.

Vefyk Efendi said that it would be in the recollection of the Conference, that it had been his duty to object in August last to the idea then entertained of sending foreign troops to Syria, because he had been confident that their presence in that province was not required, and that the Porte could, by its own resources, restore and maintain its authority; that this had proved to be the case, order having been re-established by the sole agency of the Turkish authorities; that Syria was now tranquil, and that he had consequently to require the execution of the Convention of the 5th of September, by the withdrawal of the troops of occupation, of whose conduct, however, he spoke in terms of eulogy.

M. Thouvenel, in thanking Vefyk Efendi for the complimentary expressions which he had employed in speaking of the French troops, added that he could not entertain the same opinion as the Ambassador, that their presence in Syria was no longer necessary. True, Syria was apparently tranquil, but all the accounts received by the French Government went to show that this tranquillity was only upon the surface; that bitter passions were raging underneath, which it was to be feared would break out whenever the troops should be withdrawn. It was known that 7,000 Druses had retired into the recesses of the Hauran; that they were arming afresh; while, on the other hand, not one of the Chiefs declared guilty had as yet been punished; no indemnities had been paid to the suffering Christians; no Government whatever existed in the Mountain. He concluded, therefore, that until satisfaction had been given on the former points, and until a settled Government for the Lebanon had been organized with the help of the European Commission, it was in the interests of the Porte itself that the foreign occupation should be maintained, since a fresh catastrophe might place in peril the very existence of the Sultan's supremacy.

A long and somewhat desultory conversation ensued between Vefyk Efendi and the French Minister. The former argued that if the Commission had not made greater progress in the task entrusted to it, that was no fault of the Porte's, but was a question to be treated between the Commissioners and their respective Governments. "With the Commission, however," said Vefyk Efendi, "I have nothing to do. I am instructed to ask for the execution of the Convention, a matter totally apart from the Commission."

M. Thouvenel, on the other hand, argued that although no positive reference

had been made in the Convention to the objects of the European Commission, yet that the two were by the nature of things so intimately connected that the intentions of the Convention could not be said to have been fulfilled until the reorganization of the Lebanon, one of the points which was to occupy the Commission, should have been accomplished.

Turning to Article V, he argued that it implied that if the object which the High Contracting Parties had in view, namely, the pacification of Syria, should not be realized within six months, the occupation might be prolonged. But that pacification could not be said to be realized until there should be a settled government in the Lebanon; while, with regard to other parts of Syria, his Excellency read extracts of a despatch which he had just received from the French Consul at Damascus, relating a conversation which he had had with the Commander-in-chief of the Turkish forces, who, he said, had admitted to him that he had not sufficient troops to maintain order, and that he must have reinforcements from Constantinople before it would be possible to undertake an expedition against the Hauran. The same despatch alluded to a number of other points which, in the writer's opinion, should be settled before the French troops ought to be withdrawn.

I took up the discussion at this point. I said that to follow out the suggestions contained in the despatch which M. Thouvenel had just read to us would be neither more nor less than to sanction the permanent occupation of Syria.

M. Thouvenel interrupted me by exclaiming that nothing was further from his thoughts; that he wanted no more than to be certain that there would be a responsible Government in the Lebanon whenever the troops of occupation should be withdrawn.

Referring, then, to the argument which M. Thouvenel had employed to establish a connection between the objects of the Commission and those of the Convention, I said that I could not accept it, nor the interpretation put by him on the Vth Article of the latter. The spirit and intention of the Convention, I observed, was to be found in the preamble, which declared the intention of the Sultan to put an end, by prompt and efficacious measures, to the effusion of blood in Syria, and His Majesty's firm resolution to ensure order and peace among the populations placed under his sovereignty, for which purposes he accepted the co-operation of Europe. The Articles regulated the manner in which that co-operation was to be given.

With regard to the present state of Syria I said that the reports received by Her Majesty's Government, from Her Majesty's Commissioner at Beyrout, differed essentially from those received by the Imperial Government.

In Lord Dufferin's opinion, who, however, did full justice to the happy results obtained by the co-operation of Europe, and more particularly of France, the Sultan was in a position to redeem the pledges which had been given in the preamble of the Convention, without the further assistance of his allies, and, therefore, acting under the instructions of Her Majesty's Government, I must support the request made by the Turkish Representative for the due execution of the Convention.

M. Thouvenel continued to maintain his own views. He expressed more than once his firm conviction that the departure of the troops would be followed by fresh horrors, which, this time, would not stop at Damascus.

I said that all his arguments only tended to prove, in my mind, that the longer the evacuation was delayed, the greater would be the difficulties hereafter thrown in the way of its accomplishment; that I doubted whether, at this moment, the presence of foreign troops was not more pernicious than salutary towards the object which we all had in view. It tended to raise extravagant expectations on the one side, and to keep up irritation on the other, while the authority of the Sovereign was almost in abeyance; nor could I help adding that that occupation did not prevent many acts of atrocity committed by the Christians against the Druses.

M. Thouvenel said that he had no knowledge of any such acts, which were certainly regrettable, if true; but the facts I had alleged only strengthened his conviction of the state of things which would arise were the troops of occupation to be withdrawn.

We had now been for some time in discussion without any progress towards a solution of the question proposed to us. The Russian Ambassador had here

and there put in a word in support of M. Thouvenel's arguments. The Austrian Ambassador and Prussian Minister had not opened their lips.

With a view, then, of coming to some conclusion, I said that Her Majesty's Government were of opinion that it might be advisable that the Maritime Powers should station naval squadrons off the coast of Syria as soon as the season would permit of it.

There would be no necessity, I observed, for any Convention for this purpose; but the presence of the ships would insure protection where it was wanted in case of need.

Both M. Thouvenel and General Kisseleff exclaimed that ships would be of no use in the Mountain; but I expressed the hope and, indeed, the conviction that the flags on the coast would, with the Turkish forces on land, suffice to insure tranquillity. Besides, I said, there was always the possibility of landing a force.

Prince Metternich asked when the season would permit naval squadrons to lie off the coast. I replied, that Her Majesty's Government proposed having one there on the 1st of May. The Prince then suggested that it might be possible to come to an understanding which might suit all parties. Might not the occupation be prolonged until the arrival of the squadrons, say, until the 1st of May?

Vefyk Efendi said that he would not stand in the way of an arrangement of the kind, provided he had the assurance that the foreign troops would have left Syria on the date in question. I said that it must be matter of a fresh Convention. This was contested by the Russian Ambassador, but after a short discussion, agreed to as necessary by the other Representatives. When, however, we came to discuss the terms of the new Convention, M. Thouvenel objected to making the term of the 1st of May absolutely binding. He reiterated all his former arguments of the necessity of a recognized Government in the Lebanon before the troops should be withdrawn; but he asserted that if that Government were to be installed to-morrow, he would abandon the Lebanon to its fate the next day. He proposed then the signature of a short Convention, prolonging the occupation to the 1st of May, with an understanding that the Conference should re-assemble again in April to decide the moment of evacuation. In the meantime, the different Governments might send instructions to their Commissioners to hurry the project for the re-organization of the Lebanon.

I said that M. Thouvenel's proposal kept the whole question open; that one unwilling member of the Commission might cause delays without end.

M. Thouvenel replied, that he would not object to fixing a day on which the Commission must be ready with its Report. The Commissioners might then proceed with it to Constantinople, and, unless the Porte made unnecessary delays, the whole matter might be settled in a comparatively short time.

It was not in the power either of the Turkish Ambassador or of myself to accept M. Thouvenel's proposal; and, as it was evident that nothing more was to be obtained by discussion, I proposed that the Conference should adjourn, in order that the Representatives might refer to their respective Governments.

It was agreed that the following Minute should be made of the result of the sitting:—

"A la suite de la discussion qui a eu lieu le Plénipotentiaire Ottoman a admis qu'il pourrait transmettre à sa Cour une proposition qui tendrait à signer une Convention prolongeant pour tout délai le terme de l'occupation au 1 Mai."

It is impossible for me to take upon myself to fathom the policy of the French Government in this question; but my impression is, that, pressed by their authorities, both Consular and Military, at Beyrout, jealous of their prestige in the Lebanon, and afraid of giving further offence to the clergy in France, they are seeking to gain time. I believe that, at this moment, M. Thouvenel is sincere in stating that the troops shall be withdrawn whenever the new organization of the Lebanon shall be completed; but it is evident that no confidence can be placed in him or in his promises. If I did not fear the consequences of abandoning the Porte altogether, I should venture to recommend Her Majesty's Government to declare that, seeing that all their endeavours to come to an understanding with France are unsuccessful, they hold her to her engagements. If this is not done, I see no other course to adopt than to accept M. Thouvenel's proposal to fix the day on which the Commission must have terminated its Report, and then to

hurry its adoption by the Porte, so that the excuse of no settled Government in the Lebanon shall at least be done away with.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

No. 429.

Lord J. Russell to Earl Cowley.

(No. 215. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, February 21, 1861.

I HAVE read with much attention your despatches Nos. 252, 253, and 254, of the 19th instant.

It is obvious that the French Government wish to prolong indefinitely the stay of their troops in Syria.

At Paris this desire is placed on a wish to see the labours of the Commission finished, and a new Government of the Mountain organized. A fear of renewed massacres is likewise ostentatiously put forward.

In Syria, however, nothing of the kind is pretended. It is then seen that the Commission could organize, with great ease, a government for the Lebanon, and that nothing prevents their doing so but the divergence of opinion expressed by the French Commissioners. The Austrian, Prussian, Russian, and British Commissioners are entirely agreed that there should be a Christian Chief or Governor of the Mountain, who shall not be a native of the Province. The Government of the Porte can hardly object to a proposal so reasonable, and so much in conformity with the arrangements of 1842-45.

Nor does there appear, at present, in Syria, the apprehension expressed at Paris of a massacre. It is true that many Druse women and children, as well as men, have been killed, but the Turkish force appears sufficient to enforce and ensure tranquillity.

It is certain, however, that French officers in Syria give other reasons for continued occupation. They say that the French army must accomplish some brilliant feat of arms before they go away, and an expedition to the Hauran is spoken of for that purpose.

Now it is easy to conceive that, if such an expedition should take place, many Druses will be killed, and their houses and villages destroyed. These acts will excite a spirit of revenge, and the French General may then plausibly say that the departure of his troops will be the signal of a bloody conflict.

Thus the indefinite occupation and final conquest of Syria may be accomplished.

M. Thouvenel has told Prince Metternich that he cannot agree to remove the troops to the coast, as the coast is unhealthy, and in the spring of the year there may be truth in this assertion. But the French Government might agree to an engagement not to send their troops further into the interior than their present positions.

If M. Thouvenel proposes a postponement of the commencement of the evacuation till the 1st of May, and its termination on the 1st of June, he might be asked, before such a proposition is submitted to Her Majesty's Government, whether he would agree thus far to restrict the action of the French troops.

Prince Metternich has said to your Excellency that the question of Syria was as nothing in his estimation to the interests of his own Government.

You may inform Prince Metternich that the question of the supply of arms in the Principalities is as nothing in our estimation compared to the question of Syria.

Her Majesty's Government are making themselves unpopular in the Principalities by their endeavours to return the arms brought from Genoa to that port.

If Her Majesty's Government are asked to promote the interests of Austria on the Danube, and told at the same time that the interests of Her Majesty's Government in the Mediterranean are as nothing to Austria, Prince Metternich must see that this one-sided relation cannot long continue, and that Her Majesty's Government must treat Austrian interests as matters of indifference to Great Britain.

But Her Majesty's Government have always been under the impression that the maintenance of the Turkish Empire, and the prevention of the acquisition of its provinces by powerful European States, was an object in regard to which the Austrian Government considered itself as having a great and direct interest, and it is not easy to see how, if that be so, the Austrian Government can maintain that it has no interest in preventing Syria from falling under the dominion of France.

It is manifest that the transfer of Syria to France would soon be followed by an extension of French dominion to other parts of Asia Minor; that the example thus set by France, with the support of Russia, would soon be followed in Europe by Russia with the support of France; and the Austrian Government would ere long find that vital interests of Austria had been sacrificed by the weakness and short-sightedness which her Government would have applied to the consideration of the Syrian question.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 430.

Lord A. Loftus to Lord J. Russell.—(Received February 18.)

(No. 9.)

My Lord,

Berlin, February 16, 1861.

IN reply to my inquiry of Baron Schleinitz this morning, as to the period when the projected Conference at Paris on the affairs of Syria would meet, his Excellency informed me that he believed that the Conference would be held in that capital in a day or two.

I inquired further of his Excellency what instructions he had sent to the Prussian Representative at Paris on that question.

Baron Schleinitz stated that he had written to Count Pourtalès to say that the Prussian Government could not consider that the state of the Mountain was such as to preclude all fears of a renewal of disorder. He considered that if the foreign troops were now removed, and that similar atrocities to those which had necessitated their presence were to be renewed, a spirit of indignation would be raised against Turkey which would compromise the very existence of the Empire, and possibly be its deathblow ("lui donnerait son coup de grace"); consequently the Prussian Government could not take upon themselves the responsibility of recommending their withdrawal.

His Excellency was of opinion that a limit for the occupation should be laid down; and he seemed to think that the period for the closing of the labours of the Commission, when a settled Government of the Mountain should be installed, would be the natural and more desirable period.

At the same time, his Excellency fully agreed that no prolongation of the occupation could be assented to in opposition to the wishes of the Sultan; and he further supported the principle that the unanimity of the Powers was requisite, and that the question could not be decided by a majority in the Conference.

His Excellency stated that he believed that an arrangement would be come to between Her Majesty's Government and that of the Emperor of the French, which would remove all further difficulties with respect to this question.

I have, &c.
(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

No. 431.

Lord J. Russell to Earl Cowley.

(No. 216.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, February 21, 1861.

HER Majesty's Government have no objection to the proposal to fix a day when the Report of the Commission must be signed. That day should be a very early one.

Indeed, if it were not that instructions from Paris hamper the French Commissioner, the Report might be signed by this day, as your Excellency will see

by the heads of a Report contained in Lord Dufferin's despatch No. 68 of the 10th instant.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 432.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received February 23.)

(No. 265.)

My Lord,

Paris, February 22, 1861.

I CALLED on M. Thouvenel this afternoon, and informed him that Her Majesty's Government had no objection to the proposal to fix a day when the Report of the Commission sitting at Beyrout must be signed. I said that the day fixed might be an early one, as the Commissioners appeared to be pretty well agreed, with the exception of M. Bécarré, whose opinions differed from those of his colleagues; but instructions from hence, I hinted, might set that difficulty to rights.

M. Thouvenel feigned great surprise at hearing what I told him, and declared that he had received nothing from M. Bécarré upon the subject which I had mentioned.

This can hardly be the case. Pursuing my communication, I said that what had passed in Conference had not modified the opinion of Her Majesty's Government with reference to the evacuation of Syria, and that they must continue to urge its completion by the 1st of May.

M. Thouvenel replied that, on reporting to the Council of Ministers the result of the meeting of the Conference, the Emperor and several of his (M. Thouvenel's) colleagues had expressed their opinion that if the French Government were to be again tied down to a day on which the evacuation must be effected, they would prefer carrying it into execution at once, leaving to the Porte the responsibility of the consequences which must ensue. The Emperor had not positively taken any decision, but the Council would reconsider the matter to-morrow. He would probably be charged to inform the Cabinets of the Great Powers that the Imperial Government, seeing the divergence of opinion which prevailed with regard to a prolonged occupation, preferred to abide by the engagements already taken, to contracting fresh ones. He should, however, at the same time, call the attention of the Cabinets to the consequences which might be the result of the departure of the troops—consequences which his Excellency enumerated in much the same terms as those employed on former occasions; and he should leave the whole responsibility with the Porte.

I said that I rejoiced to hear that there was a possibility of the Council of Ministers coming to the prudent determination mentioned by his Excellency.

I then asked whether M. Thouvenel proposed convoking the Conference afresh, but he seemed to have taken no determination upon the subject.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

No. 433.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received February 23.)

(No. 266. Most Confidential.)

My Lord,

Paris, February 22, 1861.

WITH reference to my previous despatch the following details have come from different sources to my knowledge.

After the Conference had broken up on Tuesday M. Thouvenel detained Prince Metternich, and informed him that he intended to ask the Emperor's permission to propose at the ensuing Conference that the evacuation of Syria should commence on the 1st of May, and terminate on the 1st of June. Yesterday he stated to the Prince that the Emperor had been exceedingly angry at learning what had passed in the Conference, and was still more angry at the

suggestion which he (M. Thouvenel) had made to him, and that His Majesty had declared that, sooner than submit to the indignity of being tied down in such a way as M. Thouvenel proposed, he would act up to the original Convention, and bring away his troops at once, leaving to the Porte the whole responsibility of what he believed would be the inevitable consequences of their withdrawal.

Now, although this resolution may be partially acted upon in the manner in which M. Thouvenel announced it to me, as recounted in my preceding despatch, I have reasons for thinking that his Excellency hopes, by the form of declaration which he will employ, to intimidate the other Governments, and particularly that of Her Majesty, and thus render them more amenable to the prolonged stay of the French troops until a Government shall be organized in the Lebanon; and that if he finds that his scheme does not succeed, he will revert to the idea of a prolonged occupation to be terminated under a new Convention at a fixed period. It was under this impression that I remarked to him that I rejoiced to hear that the Council of Ministers would possibly take the prudent resolution which he had announced to me of preferring the evacuation at the time fixed by the Convention of the 5th September to another Convention fixing the 1st of May as the time.

M. Thouvenel had hoped to inspire alarm by a brusque change of determination. I took care that he should see that, as far as I was concerned it inspired no apprehension whatever.

Your Lordship can set me right if you deem that I expressed myself too positively.

But, whatever may be the arrangement eventually arrived at, I deem it of great consequence that Her Majesty's Government should send, at as early a period as will be safe, a strong naval squadron to the coast of Syria. We must be prepared for every sort and kind of intrigue to create disturbances and to embarrass the Porte, when it is seen that the French troops are really coming away. But the presence of a British squadron will give confidence to the Porte's officers, while it will deter them from exercising unnecessary severity. It will equally reassure the populations of those countries.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

No. 434.

Lord J. Russell to Earl Cowley.

(No. 227.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, February 23, 1861.

I HAVE to acquaint your Excellency that Her Majesty's Government entirely approve the language held by your Excellency in your conversation with M. Thouvenel on the affairs of Syria, as reported in your despatch No. 265 of the 22nd instant.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 435.

Sir H. Bulwer to Lord J. Russell.—(Received February 23.)

(No. 115.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, February 13, 1861.

HAVING communicated to Aali Pasha the substance of Lord Dufferin's recent despatches, and especially No. 106 of the 18th of January, which intimates a belief that Fud Pasha has been restrained from following his own liberal inclinations by the fanatical tendencies of the Porte, his Highness denied this accusation in the most direct and positive manner: and as Lord Dufferin does not specify any particular instances in which the influence thus described has been exercised, I found it impossible to maintain any argument on the subject.

With respect, however, to two or three points concerning which Lord Dufferin generally complained, I brought them under Aali Pasha's notice.

With regard to the confiscation of the property of those Druses who had suffered the extreme penalty of the law, Aali Pasha declared himself most decidedly hostile to the principle of confiscation. But having, as he said, understood that the Commissioners had insisted in similar cases on the property of Mussulmans being confiscated, he had considered that in such case one rule should be equally applied.

I should add, however, that confiscation is against the laws of the Empire, and that the fair and just thing would be not to sanction confiscation with respect to the children either of Druse or Moslem.

As to the indemnity, Aali Pasha said that he considered the sum demanded by M. Outrey as so enormous that he had hesitated in consenting to it; but when a fact of which he seemed to have been for some time ignorant was pointed out to him, viz., that according to Protocol 14 the 150,000,000 piastres seemed reduced to 64,000,000, he made no further difficulty on the matter.

It may be urged, perhaps, in defence of his first objections that the Commissioners themselves seem to have taken at last the view which was originally taken by Aali Pasha, since they appear to have themselves reduced the penalty which it was at first proposed to inflict.

Touching Khoorshid Pasha's punishment Aali Pasha declares that Fuad was perfectly unfettered, but that when that person had been condemned to a certain punishment by a tribunal, and had had his sentence approved of by the Ottoman Commissioner, the Porte could hardly, even if disposed, have altered such sentence without a great scandal, and also a great loss of prestige to the high functionary on the spot.

I have written to Lord Dufferin for further particulars as to any charges he has to bring against this Government, and until I get them, I can say no more than that I do not think, whatever may be the other faults of the present Administration here, it can be charged with fanaticism.

And now I am on this subject, I would venture to draw a distinction between an exaggerated Mussulman fanaticism and a natural Mussulman spirit.

Whilst strongly, as your Lordship is aware, in favour of introducing the Christian element into the Ottoman Government, I cannot but admit that we must expect a Government chiefly Mussulman, and a Mussulman Sovereign, to have a certain Mussulman tendency. It is moreover to be expected that a Government which knows that the only force it can depend upon is Mussulman, should have a certain desire to retain a fair opinion with the Mussulman population.

All this is in the nature of things. What it seems to me we have to do, is to see that the Mussulman feeling to which I am alluding is not carried to any excessive or blameable extent; making a legitimate allowance for the necessary difference between what our feelings as Christians may be towards Christians, and the feelings which the Mussulmans may entertain towards Mussulmans.

In regard to the evacuation of Syria, Aali Pasha maintains it is an absolute necessity for the tranquillity of the province. He is sending there, however, three regiments of Cavalry, and General Kmety is to have the charge of the gendarmerie which is being organised.

I am still, as is Lord Dufferin, greatly in favour of a small foreign force in Turkish pay: 1,000 or 1,800 men would suffice.

Such a force I think, would furnish a strong moral support and comfort to the Christian population; whilst it would also be a great moral and material help to the Turks, who will otherwise be in a critical position, in the excited state which will probably follow the departure of the French troops, should any troubles, however insignificant, arise in a Christian quarter.

A Turkish soldiery, under such circumstances, might either be so inactive as to destroy the prestige of the Government, or, by its action, give occasion to a cry that new massacres were commencing.

Aali and Rushdi Pasha seem favourable to the project of which I am speaking, but the rest of the Ministers oppose it. I have begged Lord Dufferin to let me know Fuad Pasha's private and honest opinion on the subject.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY L. BULWER.

No. 436.

Lord J. Russell to Lord Bloomfield.

(No. 29.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, February 23, 1861.

HER Majesty's Government are glad to find from your Excellency's telegram of yesterday, that the opinion of the Austrian Cabinet that it should rest with the Porte alone to decide whether the stay of French troops in Syria should be prolonged, has not been altered by what took place at the meeting of the Conference in Paris on the 19th instant. Her Majesty's Government agree entirely in that opinion.

As regards the report which appears to have reached Vienna that the French Government, rather than agree to any fresh arrangement binding them to withdraw their troops from Syria by a day which, though later than that named in the Convention of the 5th of September, should still be definitively fixed, would prefer to withdraw their troops at once, and to leave with the Porte the whole responsibility for the consequences of that measure, I have to state to your Excellency that if the French Government prefers the latter alternative, the adoption of which would immediately re-establish the Sultan's authority in Syria, Her Majesty's Government would offer no objection to that course, although they are willing, under conditions to be recorded in a fresh Convention, to consent that the stay of the French troops should be prolonged to the 1st of May, or even to the 1st of June.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 437.

Lord J. Russell to Sir H. Bulwer.

(No. 101.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, February 23, 1861.

I HAVE apprized your Excellency by telegraph that Her Majesty's Government have been informed that the French Government may possibly determine upon withdrawing the French troops from Syria without loss of time.

With reference to such a contingency the Porte would do well to instruct Fuad Pasha to collect together a force sufficient to preserve order in the Lebanon, and to afford protection indiscriminately to Christians and Druses; and your Excellency has been directed to make a communication to that effect to the Turkish Government.

I have used the term Christians and Druses for convenience and brevity, but of course I mean to include Jews, Metualis, and all other subjects of the Sultan in Syria.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 438.

Lord J. Russell to Sir H. Bulwer.

(No. 112.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, February 25, 1861.

WITH regard to the charge of fanaticism brought against the Turkish Government by Lord Dufferin, and noticed in your Excellency's despatch No. 115 of the 13th instant, Her Majesty's Government imagine that Lord Dufferin does not intend to charge Aali Pasha or any particular Turkish Ministers with fanaticism, but the Turkish Government in general with yielding to the fanatical spirit of the Turks.

The whole misfortunes and difficulties of Syria have arisen from the connivance of Khoorshid Pasha with the murderers of Deir-el-Kamar, and from the cowardice of Achmet Pasha at Damascus.

Achmet Pasha has expiated his cowardice with his life. Khoorshid, after an attempt had been made by Fuad Pasha to retain him in the Government of

Syria, was arrested and brought to trial. Care was taken to prevent the appearance of witnesses against him, and he is to be dismissed with a light punishment.

It does not much matter whether the Sultan's Ministers who have thus condoned the most guilty of all the accomplices of the Syrian massacres are themselves fanatical, or whether they are afraid of others who are so. The existence of a fanatical party in Turkey cannot be doubted: that this party seeks to console itself, by murders and massacres, for the advantages given to Christians by the Sultan of late years, appears but too evident. If Fuad Pasha had been instructed to bring all the proofs of Khoorshid's guilt to light, Khoorshid's life could hardly have been saved, and his exemplary punishment would have intimidated the whole fanatical party in Turkey. Whether the Turkish Government acted from sympathy with that party, or dread of their opposition, the result is equally to be deplored.

If the Sultan wishes to employ a small body of Christian troops, he may easily raise such a body among his own subjects. But they must be regularly paid, or their fidelity will be doubtful.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 439.

Acting Consul Wrench to Lord J. Russell.—(Received February 26.)

(No. 3.)

My Lord,

Damascus, February 7, 1861.

I HAVE the honour herewith to transmit to your Lordship two despatches addressed to his Excellency Sir Henry Lytton Bulwer, the first dated the 1st instant on the re-organization of the Great Council of the Pashalic, and the second of to-day's date, being a report on the present deplorable condition of the Christians still in Damascus.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WILLIAM H. WRENCH.

Inclosure 1 in No. 439.

Acting Consul Wrench to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Damascus, February 1, 1861.

IN my despatch of the 10th January I had the honour to inform your Excellency that the Pasha was engaged in re-organizing the Great Medjlis. With regard to three of the Mussulman members, Osman Bey, Khalil Bey, and Dervish Efendi, the election was effected in the following manner. About thirty persons were brought to the Serai, and, a candidate being proposed, they voted either before or against him, but as the voters were chosen by the advice of Osman Bey, he and his friend Khalil Bey were returned with hardly any dissenting voices. Mahmoud Efendi Hamsi was appointed by the Pasha without voting.

The Vali, Mohassabagee, Mufti, Cadi, Chief of the Wakuf, and Nufus Mahmoudi (Chief Registrar) sit by right, there being also a Jewish, a Catholic, and a Greek member chosen by their respective sects. Other Christian members will be appointed when the numbers of the communities require it.

The business is conducted in Turkish, which language is not understood by Dervish Efendi, the Jewish or Christian members; the three latter sit apart, and hardly ever venture a remark.

The Council, not counting extraordinary occasions, meets three times a-week. The members do not generally assemble until 11 o'clock A.M., Osman Bey being in three other Medjlises, and being Sandook Eminch of the Civil Government as well as for the Christians, is always late and sometimes absent; most of the others also hold some other post under Government, which interferes with their regular attendance. When the members arrive coffee, pipes, and conversation occupy an hour or more, the Pasha looks over his letters, and the business begins, but is interrupted during the day by the members praying at

the noon and 3 o'clock calls. If the Pasha is present the sitting continues until half-an-hour before sunset, but if his Excellency is absent little is done, and the Medjlis breaks up early.

The business is dispatched without any sort of order or regularity. A petitioner has to commence his suit by a bribe to one of the members, his memorial entering the Council by means of a present to the door-keeper; the propitiated member will bring on the case, the memorial will be read, and he explains it to the Pasha. The petitioner is then called, his answers are translated into Turkish by the said member in the manner that suits him, and a sentence is at length drawn up, without a very careful examination into the rights of the case. If these means are not employed the petition is put on one side by the clerks, after having satisfied the demand of the door-keeper, will remain forgotten, the petitioner waiting outside the Medjlis for thirty days or more and seeing that nothing is done, is at last obliged to conform to the customs of the place.

The Vali and Mohassabagee do not receive bribes; but with this exception, and that of Dervish Efendi, the Jewish and Catholic members, who are newly appointed and do not possess any influence, all the Council, including clerks and door-keeper, are open to accept such sums as the petitioners may offer, as the only means of hoping for a termination to their suits.

The Pasha, I believe, is not content with the working of the Council as it is at present constituted, and it is to be hoped his Excellency will see the necessity for a thorough change in its organization.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WILLIAM H. WRENCH.

Inclosure 2 in No. 439.

Acting Consul Wrench to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Damascus, February 7, 1861.

SINCE I had the honour on the 24th ultimo to address your Excellency on the affairs of Damascus, the weather has become most wintry; the roads being blocked by the snow we have not been in communication with Beyrout since the 25th ultimo, and no news is received from outside the town. The Christians consequently have not been lately alarmed by reported movements among the Druses and Arabs. Their position, however, is in the highest degree painful. The Government give them, it is true, two small flat loaves of bread daily per head, but that is all; some have received no charcoal, and many have exhausted their supply, the same with the firewood; for more than fifty-five days they have received no money from the Government, they are obliged to buy provisions on credit, the first money they receive going to liquidate these debts. Thus badly clothed, half-starved, and ill-lodged, the water in most cases filtering through the terraces into their rooms, their sufferings are terrible, and driven to desperation it cannot be wondered at that some individuals seek to drown their cases in drunkenness.

The bread has been slightly improved within the last few days, but, made from a mixture of barley, wheat, and maize, half-baked, it is still very unwholesome; but before this amelioration it was not fit food for a human being.

The French Consul is now distributing some cloth, and about 2,000*l.* sterling; he will recommence with a similar amount when the first is exhausted. I have given away for the Relief Committee within the last week 210 warm sheepskin coats, and about 150 blankets to the poorest, besides small amounts in money to the sick; but this is not much among such a numerous population. According to the registers made by the French Consulate there are upwards of 9,300 souls, of whom about 2,700 are villagers; these numbers include the Meidan quarter, not counted in the calculation of Arzouman Efendi, which I had the honour to report on the 10th of January.

The roads being impassable, the Christians are forced to remain here very much against their will. They hear that at Beyrout the Government allowance is regularly paid, that several Committees are established to look after the comforts of the refugees, and that private persons do all they can for them: it is natural, therefore, that they should wish to remove from a place where their

wants are so little attended to. If, when the weather clears up, anything remains from the money they are now receiving, I think it will be difficult to induce them to stay. The French Consul told me a few days ago that he should make no more efforts to this end, as for the last four months he had done all he could to retain them, hoping the Turkish Government would have arranged something to improve their condition: now, however, that he sees no steps taken in their behalf, he will no more advise them to stay; his employes, I believe, counsel the receivers of his charity to leave as soon as they can.

A Greek Christian, the agent to recover what articles were found in clearing out the ruins of the Greek Patriarchate, last week finding the silver case of a watch, kept it with the intention of returning it to the owner; a party of soldiers met him when returning home, took from him his money and the watch-case, ill-treated him, and put him in prison, where he remained all night; on being taken out he had lost his reason, and after a few days died.

Khaled Pasha is gone to the Hauran, with what object is not known.

It is believed here that the Pasha has granted an amnesty to nine Druse Chiefs of the Hauran, more than one of whom was implicated in the late massacres. His Excellency was contemplating such a measure; but I doubt whether he has yet decided on it.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WILLIAM H. WRENCH.

No. 440.

M. Thouvenel to the Count de Flahault.—(Communicated to Lord J. Russell by the Count de Flahault, February 27.)

M. le Comte,

Paris, le 25 Février, 1861.

LES Plénipotentiaires de l'Autriche, de la Grande Bretagne, de la Prusse, de la Russie, et de la Turquie, se sont réunis avec moi en Conférence le 19 Février, pour s'occuper des affaires de Syrie, et j'ai l'honneur de vous envoyer ci-joint le projet de Protocole de cette séance.

L'Article V de la Convention signée le 5 Septembre dernier étant ainsi conçu: "Les Hautes Parties Contractantes, convaincues que ce délai sera suffisant pour atteindre le but de pacification qu'elles ont en vue, fixent à six mois la durée de l'occupation des troupes Européennes en Syrie," la question qui se posait était celle de savoir si la conviction des Puissances se trouvait justifiée par les faits et si l'œuvre à laquelle elles avaient entendu concourir leur paraissait réellement accomplie.

Invité à s'expliquer le premier, en sa qualité de Représentant de la Puissance territoriale, le Plénipotentiaire de la Turquie a affirmé que l'ordre était rétabli et que la Sublime Porte disposait de tous les moyens nécessaires pour l'empêcher d'être troublé. J'ai dû contester la valeur de cette assertion, et, après un débat dont le Protocole ci-annexé reproduit les principaux détails, son Excellence Ahmet Vefyk Efendi a déclaré que, mû par un esprit de conciliation, il se croyait autorisé à transmettre à Constantinople la proposition de prolonger l'occupation, si l'on convenait d'une date précise, qu'il a fixée, pour tout délai, au 1 Mai prochain. Avant de se prononcer sur l'accueil à faire à cette suggestion, les Plénipotentiaires ont jugé convenable d'en référer à leurs Cours respectives. Je viens donc, M. le Comte, vous exposer quelle est au sujet la manière de voir du Gouvernement de l'Empereur.

L'obligation où nous sommes de nous expliquer avec une entière franchise ne résulte pas seulement de nos sympathies pour des populations cruellement éprouvées, elle découle aussi du mandat que les Puissances ont donné à la France en la chargeant seule de pourvoir, en leur nom comme au sien, à l'envoi d'un corps expéditionnaire en Syrie. La confiance même dont le Gouvernement de l'Empereur a été l'objet de la part de ses alliés lui impose une responsabilité plus directe, et il ne saurait s'en dégager qu'en faisant connaître, comme ses informations le lui représentent, l'état actuel des choses.

La présence de nos troupes dans le Liban a obtenu de prime abord un résultat considérable. Elle a mis fin aux massacres qui menaçaient de s'étendre bien au-delà des régions habitées par les Druses et les Maronites, mais il ne suffisait pas d'arrêter l'effusion du sang, il fallait que justice fût faite aux

coupables comme aux victimes; il était non moins essentiel d'aviser aux moyens de conjurer autant que possible le retour d'événements semblables à ceux qui ont soulevé l'an dernier l'indignation et la pitié de l'Europe. C'est sous l'empire de ces considérations multiples que les Puissances, au moment où une force Européenne était envoyée en Syrie, ont décidé qu'une Commission composée de leurs délégués s'y rendrait également pour assurer, de concert avec un haut fonctionnaire de la Porte, le châtement mérité par les chefs de l'insurrection, la fixation de la répartition équitable des indemnités dues aux Chrétiens, et enfin l'adoption des réformes à introduire dans le régime constitutif de la Montagne. On avait évidemment pensé que la restauration de l'ordre moral devait marcher concurremment avec la restauration de l'ordre matériel et en devenir la garantie.

Un court exposé des faits démontrera si ce double but a été atteint.

Les deux premières questions que la Commission avait à traiter, celles des punitions à infliger aux coupables et des réparations à accorder aux victimes, ne sont pas encore réglées; la troisième, celle des modifications à apporter dans l'organisation du Liban, vient à peine d'être abordée dans les entretiens confidentiels. En un mot, les principales difficultés dont la solution semblait nécessaire pour pouvoir replacer les populations dans des conditions tolérables d'existence, subsistent presque intactes.

Si de ces points particuliers on passe à l'examen de la situation générale, est-il possible d'y puiser un sentiment de confiance assez caractérisé pour accepter les déclarations du Plénipotentiaire Ottoman et admettre que la Syrie ne soit pas menacée de l'explosion d'une crise nouvelle? A Damas les Musulmans ne dissimulent ni leur ressentiment ni leurs espérances, et les Chrétiens, devant les menaces dont ils sont l'objet, ne songent qu'à fuir leurs foyers dévastés et à gagner les villes du littoral. Les Druses du Liban, qui, au nombre de 3,000 en état de porter les armes, ont pu traverser les lignes Turques et se réunir à leurs coreligionnaires du Hauran, se préparent ouvertement à la lutte et nouent des alliances avec les Arabes et les Métualis. Déjà ils envahissent les villages de la plaine jusqu'aux portes de Damas, et leurs incursions ne rencontrent aucun obstacle. La sécurité, mais une sécurité destinée à s'évanouir avec son gage, ne règne que dans les parties de la Montagne où nous sommes. Partout ailleurs les craintes et les haines ont conservé le même degré d'intensité, et une effrayante misère accroît encore la fermentation des esprits.

Je m'abstiens de rechercher si l'autorité Ottomane a fait tout ce qui dépendait d'elle pour remédier à une pareille situation; je préfère simplement m'enquérir des moyens dont elle dispose aujourd'hui pour conjurer les dangers que je prévois, et là encore j'aboutis à une autre conclusion que le Plénipotentiaire de la Turquie. Je n'accuse pas les intentions de la Porte, et je rends hommage aux sentiments du Sultan; mais il ne s'agit ici que d'une question de fait, et, sans rappeler les tristes compromissions qui ont signalé les derniers événements, il est permis de se demander si une armée régulière insuffisante en nombre, de l'aveu même de son Chef, pour atteindre les Druses dans leur refuge du Hauran, plus sympathique, pour cause de religion, à la partie menaçante qu'à la partie menacée de la population, et il faut bien le dire, attendant un arriéré de solde de trente mois, peut être offerte à l'Europe, dans des circonstances aussi critiques, comme constituant à elle seule une garantie d'ordre et de tranquillité. La dépêche ci-jointe en copie de notre Consul à Damas me dispense de m'étendre davantage sur ce sujet. Je mentionnerai cependant les intérêts et les alarmes du commerce étranger dont m'entretient notre Consul à Beyrouth, dans le rapport également ci-annexé.

Voilà, M. le Comte, le tableau de l'état actuel de choses en Syrie, tel qu'il ressort des informations les plus récentes parvenues au Gouvernement de l'Empereur. Je ne veux pas prétendre que les autres Puissances doivent accepter, sans les contrôler par les leurs, les données que nous transmettent nos Agents, mais on ne saurait non plus nous demander de décliner leur jugement, ni contester que des présomptions sérieuses nous autorisent à déclarer que l'ordre et la paix, dans notre opinion la plus sincère, ne sont pas rétablis parmi les populations de la Syrie, comme le préambule de la Convention du 5 Septembre en exprimait le vœu formel.

La prolongation que le Plénipotentiaire Ottoman se montre disposé à proposer à sa Cour, sur la demande de la Conférence, modifierait-elle sensiblement la situation? Le Gouvernement de l'Empereur ne le pense pas. A son avis, l'accomplissement du mandat de justice et de réparation confié à la Commission

Internationale, et la conclusion d'un nouvel accord des Puissances avec la Porte au sujet de l'organisation de la Montagne du Liban, pourraient seuls fournir à l'Europe la garantie morale dont elle a besoin pour renoncer, en toute sûreté de conscience, à la garantie matérielle qu'elle avait cru trouver dans l'envoi en Syrie d'un corps de troupes étrangères. Un délai invariablement fixé à deux mois ne permet pas d'espérer que ce résultat soit atteint, et si l'occupation Européenne ne doit pas durer jusqu'à ce que son objet soit rempli, nous ne voyons pas, en ce qui nous concerne, de raison plausible pour en demander la prolongation. Le Gouvernement de l'Empereur, en effet, ne poursuit en Syrie aucun but qui lui soit particulier, et ses intérêts politiques ne sont ni plus grands ni moindres que ceux de ses alliés.

Notre conviction est qu'une entente nouvelle serait aussi nécessaire aujourd'hui qu'à l'époque où la première a été établie. Pour le bien des populations, pour celui de la Porte comme pour celui des Cabinets si directement intéressés à ce que des incidents en Orient ne viennent pas augmenter les difficultés de leur politique générale, nous croyons fermement qu'il serait très grave de livrer aux chances du hasard une question qu'un sentiment de prévoyance et d'humanité conseillerait, selon nous, d'examiner et de résoudre en commun. Telle est, M. le Comte, l'opinion que je développerai dans la prochaine Conférence; j'aurai soin d'ailleurs de rappeler encore que le Gouvernement de l'Empereur, lorsqu'il a accepté la tâche que les Puissances lui ont dévolue, a exprimé le regret qu'elles n'y participassent pas au même titre, et j'ajouterai que nous considérerions comme essentiellement désirable que la réunion d'autres troupes aux nôtres vint donner au corps d'occupation un caractère réellement Européen et lui permette d'achever avec promptitude et dans des conditions assurées de succès l'œuvre qu'il a commencée. Si nos alliés ne croient pas pouvoir partager cette manière de voir, si la Sublime Porte la repousse, la Convention du 5 Septembre étant arrivée à son terme, je devrai déclarer que le Gouvernement de l'Empereur, en exécution d'un engagement dont l'accord unanime des Puissances Contractantes aurait eu seul la force de le relever, n'entend pas retarder le départ de ses troupes au delà du temps nécessaire pour l'effectuer, et décline pour sa part la responsabilité des événements.

Vous êtes autorisé, M. le Comte, à donner lecture de cette dépêche à Lord John Russell.

Agréé, &c.
(Signé) THOUVENEL.

No. 441.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received February 27.)

(No. 276. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Paris, February 25, 1861.

I HAVE the honour to inclose herewith another article from the "Journal des Débats" of yesterday, relating to the affairs of Syria.

I took some trouble to ascertain the name of the author of the article from the same journal which I transmitted in my despatch No. 205 of the 7th instant. I was informed that it was a Captain Reybaud; but I cannot shut my eyes entirely to the fact that one of the writers in the "Débats" is M. Fleury, M. Thouvenel's brother-in-law.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

Inclosure in No. 441.

Extract from the "Journal des Débats" of February 24, 1861.

LA Conférence proposée par M. Thouvenel dans sa dépêche circulaire du 18 Janvier dernier sur les affaires de Syrie s'est réunie à Paris il y a quelques jours.

Le délai de six mois fixé par la Convention du 5 Septembre, 1860, pour la durée de l'intervention Européenne dans le Liban expire le 5 Mars prochain. Sans prendre aucune résolution définitive, on assure que la Conférence s'est ajournée à six semaines, en maintenant le *statu quo*. Nous tenons d'autant plus à prendre acte de ce premier résultat acquis à la prorogation de l'intervention, que nous le voyons tout autrement interprété par les journaux Anglais auxquels on est convenu d'attribuer une importance exceptionnelle.

En essayant dernièrement de démontrer dans ce journal, d'accord avec toute la presse impartiale et éclairée du Continent, la nécessité de prolonger l'occupation Française en Syrie sous peine d'y voir recommencer les massacres et d'y laisser l'anarchie, nous n'avions pas espéré convaincre tous nos alliés, parmi lesquels il en est qui semblent résolus à ne rien voir et à ne rien entendre: tant il est vrai que la passion politique, qu'on l'appelle jalousie, haine, ou défiance, égare la raison, comprime le cœur, et finit par dénaturer jusqu'à les compromettre les meilleurs rapports et les meilleurs sentiments.

Nous ne voulons rien dire, quelque provoqués que nous soyons, qui puisse ressembler à de la mauvaise humeur; nous avons trop raison, nous ne nous donnerons pas le tort de nous fâcher. Mais n'est-il pas étrange que ce soient précisément nos anciens alliés de Sébastopol qui viennent mettre en suspicion l'action généreuse et désintéressée de la France en Syrie? Nous ne nous accoutumerons jamais, s'il plaît à Dieu, à admettre qu'en politique il n'y ait que des intérêts. Cette politique d'hommes d'affaires, si disposés à prêter aux autres leurs propres sentiments, n'est pas celle que nous avons l'habitude de défendre. Non, non, et quoi qu'on en dise, il y a en ce pays des choses qui, mieux que les calculs les plus habiles, ont la puissance de l'émouvoir et de l'entraîner: ce sont son honneur et sa foi, ce sont les traditions chevaleresques de son histoire restées vivantes à travers les siècles. Nous n'en voudrions d'autres preuves que ses inclinations naturelles du côté des plus faibles et des persécutés, que ses sympathies avouées pour les grandes infortunes alors même qu'on les lui présente comme la conséquence de grandes fautes. Ce n'est pas en France qu'on dira jamais "vix victis!" C'est vouloir méconnaître de parti pris le caractère de la nation Française que de lui supposer toujours des vues secrètes d'ambition, d'attribuer à sa politique des arrière-pensées égoïstes. On a pu parfois l'égarer sans réussir à la corrompre, et si dans des temps désastreux on l'a vue entraînée vers le mal, elle n'a jamais tardé à se relever, ardente à réparer ses malheurs et ses fautes.

Ce n'est pas sans dessein qu'aux premières lignes de cet article nous avons appelé "intervention Européenne" l'intervention Française en Syrie. Il nous semble important de ne pas perdre de vue une situation qui n'a pas été créée par le Gouvernement de l'Empereur, mais acceptée par lui. N'écouter que les sentiments dont nous parlions tout à l'heure, et qui font sa gloire et sa force, la France eût pu, aux premières nouvelles des massacres, et sans attendre la fin des délibérations, faire partir ses soldats, avant-garde de l'Europe en Orient, champions toujours les premiers prêts de la Chrétienté.

Nous ne redisons pas pourquoi elle a attendu, et comment on lui a reproché d'être arrivée trop tard. Mais il est bon de faire ressortir ce qui est résulté de cette attente, de cette condescendance regrettable à tant de titres. Il en est résulté que l'intervention, de Française qu'elle était par l'initiative comme par le drapeau, est devenue une Mission de confiance déferée par l'Europe à la France. La France alors a pris à la charge de son honneur, de son sang, et de son or, la cessation des massacres, la réparation pour le passé, la responsabilité de l'avenir.

L'Europe, pas plus que la France, ne peuvent abandonner leur œuvre inachevée. Ceux qui prétendent y mettre un terme quand même, ne sont-ils pas ceux-là précisément qui ont imposé le délai de six mois, ne voulant pas voir qu'une limite prévue d'avance à une Mission de cette nature serait nécessairement un des plus grands obstacles à son accomplissement et à son succès?

Aussi n'est-ce pas une prorogation à délai déterminé qu'il convient, selon

nous, d'accorder à l'intervention Européenne en Syrie, mais bien une prorogation jusqu'à nouvel ordre; c'est-à-dire, sans autres limites que la certitude acquise de la paix, à défaut de l'union, rétablie et assurée dans le Liban sous une administration nouvelle, impartiale et forte, approuvée et garantie par les Puissances.

Mais comment inspirer aux uns la confiance, aux autres la crainte, faire accepter à tous la justice, si l'on nous voit divisés au point d'en être, après enquête, à discuter, comme on le fait de l'autre côté du Déroit, si ce ne sont pas les Chrétiens qui ont massacré les Druses et si ce ne sont pas les Français qui en sont cause?

Et pendant ce temps toutes les correspondances d'Orient, officielles ou privées, écrites dans toutes les langues, émanant de toutes les sources, s'accordent à présenter le départ du corps d'occupation comme le signal certain de nouveaux et plus sanglants massacres. Déjà les Druses et les Musulmans fanatiques des villes, encouragés par ces coupables sympathies trop avouées, disent hautement que l'heure approche où ils vont reprendre leur œuvre interrompue, l'extermination des Chrétiens.

Que des Turcs, plus ou moins complices en tout ceci, s'obstinent à nier la lumière qui éclaire leur impuissance et leur complicité, cela peut ne pas nous étonner; mais qu'il se trouve des Chrétiens à Londres plus Turcs qu'à Constantinople, cela fait plus que nous étonner, cela nous afflige profondément.

D'accord, avant de la connaître, avec la dépêche de M. Thouvenel, qui ne laisse aucun doute sur le désintéressement de la France dans la question de Syrie, nous demandions dernièrement qu'une partie des troupes d'occupation fussent fournies par les Puissances signataires de la Convention de Paris.

Aujourd'hui nous ferons plus encore: nous proposerons d'adjoindre aux soldats Français des soldats Prussiens et Anglais de préférence à tous autres, afin que l'on voie si d'honnêtes Protestants et de bons Catholiques ne peuvent pas s'entendre, en dépit de la politique, pour protéger les Chrétiens du Liban à quelque communion qu'ils appartiennent, sans se tromper de victime à bourreau et réciproquement.

Ce n'est pas sans une grande tristesse que nous nous sommes vus forcés de revenir sur une question où les faits parlent d'eux-mêmes avec la plus douloureuse éloquence; mais lorsqu'on les dénature ou qu'on les nie, quand le mensonge menace de prévaloir sur la vérité, il n'est pas permis de se taire.

Assez de difficiles et imposantes questions ne se dressent-elles pas devant l'Europe en ce moment, questions de droits et de devoirs, de justice et d'honneur, de paix ou de guerre, pour que sur une question d'humanité avant tout, des Puissances qui se disent Chrétiennes et alliées aient la sagesse de s'entendre?

No. 442.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received February 27.)

(No. 278. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Paris, February 26, 1861.

THE Turkish Ambassador called upon me this morning. He said that he had received a telegram from his Government, approving his conduct in the Conference on Syrian affairs which took place on the 19th instant; but I regret to add, that his conversation afterwards showed him to be disposed to extend the period of French occupation to any time that may be agreeable to the French Government, provided only that that time is fixed by a new Convention.

Vefyk Efendi stated the position of his Government to be this. They must keep on terms with the French Government, in order to prevent a total discomfiture of the Mirès loan. If the Porte cannot obtain advances from the Bank of France to meet the engagements which it has contracted, counting on the proceeds of the loan, ruin will be the consequence. It is needless, he says, to remark, that with ruin at Constantinople, the Turkish Government cannot count upon maintaining tranquillity in Syria, or any where else.

Now, it is in the power of the French Government, Vefyk Efendi states, to help the Porte in this dilemma, by engaging the Bank of France to accept and discount the bills of the Ottoman Treasury, and it is perfectly clear to me, that Vefyk Efendi will not willingly oppose any conditions relative to Syria with

which the French Government may couple the accommodation which they may give, though he may be compelled to do so, should Her Majesty's Government maintain their present attitude.

I observed to Vefyk Efendi, that Her Majesty's Government had just reason to complain of the conduct of the Porte. It was, I said, on the repeated solicitations of M. Musurus, that Her Majesty's Government had insisted, with the French Government, on the fulfilment of the Convention of the 5th September; and now I found the Porte's Ambassador at Paris ready to agree to that which the Porte's Ambassador in London had begged Her Majesty's Government to aid in preventing, namely, the prolonged occupation of Syria. But it was absolutely necessary, I continued, that I should know where I was, and I therefore begged to inquire in so many words, whether he (Vefyk) was prepared to consent to a longer prolongation of the occupation than the 1st of June.

Vefyk Efendi replied, that if it was necessary, he should not object to a term a little beyond the 1st of June, and which "little," in the mouth of a Turk, may mean anything.

Your Lordship will see that I am necessarily obliged to refer to you for further instructions. Until I receive them I neither like to commit Her Majesty's Government nor myself further in the line which we have followed until now, nor, on the other hand, can I take upon myself to make the least further concession. Under these circumstances I did not allude to the Syrian question when I was with M. Thouvenel this afternoon, and he was equally reserved with me. His time has been so much taken up with the Senate and other matters since I saw him on Friday, that neither I nor any of my colleagues are aware of the resolution taken by the Council of Ministers on Saturday. I purposely abstained from asking him myself this afternoon, but I shall learn it in the course of the evening, and inform your Lordship by telegraph.

The point on which I chiefly desire to receive your Lordship's instructions is, how far I am to advise or to oppose the Porte's Representative; but I should warn your Lordship, at the same time, of my conviction that everything that I may say to Vefyk Efendi will be repeated to M. Thouvenel.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

No. 443.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received February 27.)

(No. 280. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Paris, February 26, 1861.

I MET my Prussian colleague in M. Thouvenel's waiting-room, this afternoon, and he told me that he believed that M. Thouvenel was more disposed to agree to a fixed date within which the prolonged French occupation of Syria must cease, than he had been a few days ago. Count Pourtales believed that his Excellency was about to address a despatch on the subject to the Emperor's Representatives with the Great Powers.

Count Pourtales then proceeded to develop a plan which he conceived might be agreed to by all parties. He concurred in opinion with Her Majesty's Government that a period for the evacuation of Syria must be fixed by a Convention; but let that period, he said, be sufficiently distant to make it certain that the reorganization of the Lebanon, for which the French Government contended, will have been accomplished. He contemplates, therefore, a longer delay than the 1st of June. He suggested further, that a clause should be introduced into the new Convention, binding the French Government to withdraw, at the demand of any other Power or Powers, such a number of the French troops of occupation as the Power or Powers might be willing to replace by contingents of its or their own. Count Pourtales added that he was not astonished that the French Government should hesitate at withdrawing their troops, for it was impossible not to fear the occurrence of fresh massacres on their departure.

I could only repeat to Count Pourtales what I have so often said before, that danger of fresh disorders will always exist, and that it was for the Porte,

and not for Europe, to decide whether foreign aid was required for their repression.

With regard to his suggestion, I said that Her Majesty's Government having throughout these discussions maintained that there was no connection whatever between the Convention and the reorganization of the Government of the Mountain, could not be expected to agree to a prolongation of the occupation on the plea that that organisation had not been as yet effected, and as to the French Government being bound to withdraw a part of these troops at the demand of any other Power willing to replace them, I said, that it would merely be a stipulation upon paper, as Her Majesty's Government was the only one that could well profit by it, and they were not likely to stultify themselves by aiding in prolonging an occupation which they condemned on principle.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

No. 444.

Lord J. Russell to Earl Cowley.

(No. 238.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, February 27, 1861.

THE French Ambassador read to me yesterday a despatch from M. Thouvenel on the affairs of Syria.

M. Thouvenel relates what took place in the Conference, and states that the Ottoman Ambassador declared his Sovereign to be ready to answer at present for the tranquillity of Syria, but that he was prepared to refer to Constantinople a proposal for the prolongation of the occupation till the 1st of May.

M. Thouvenel proceeds to give various reasons why this prolongation for this term would be deemed quite insufficient by the French Government. He dwells at length on the danger of massacre, the apprehensions felt by the commercial classes, English as well as others, the shortcomings of the Commission, and the absence of any government in the Mountain.

The despatch proceeds to say that the Emperor is willing to agree to the combination of Austrian, Russian, Prussian, or British troops, with those of France in Syria. But that if no agreement can be arrived at he would conform to the terms of the Convention of September, and order the immediate evacuation of Syria by his troops.

There are two conclusions which may be fairly deduced from this despatch. The first is, that France is perfectly willing that the foreign occupation of Syria should be European, furnished, in short, by a mixed force, and not one exclusively French. The second is, that the occupation contemplated is one of indefinite duration. Its continuance is to depend on uncertain contingencies: the agreement of five or six Commissioners of different nations; their skill in organising a Government; the efficiency of the Turkish authorities; the peaceable disposition of Maronites and Druses towards each other.

There appear to Her Majesty's Government several insuperable objections to such an arrangement. The Maronites and Druses are two fierce tribes who are constantly indulging their implacable hatred against each other. The Maronites have killed in cold blood in the last few months a number of Druse men, women, and children. The Druses revenge themselves by sacking and burning a Maronite village. What is a foreign force to do in these circumstances? If the Commander undertakes to try and punish the offenders, he assumes all the duties and responsibilities of the internal administration of the province. If he refrains from interference, the foreign occupation is justly charged with leaving crime and outrage unpunished.

Another fatal objection to this course is, that the authority of the Sultan is gradually weakened to such a degree that it can never be restored. The Sultan, no doubt, felt this danger when he directed his Ambassador to ask for the evacuation.

Her Majesty's Government were quite ready to concur with the Ottoman Ambassador in prolonging the European occupation to the 1st of May. They are willing to admit that the present suggestion of the Imperial Government

excludes any suspicion that France wishes her own troops alone to occupy Syria.

But seeing all the evils of an indefinite occupation by foreign troops, they prefer, without hesitation, the immediate evacuation according to the terms of the Convention of the 5th September to that indefinite occupation.

Her Majesty's Government have always considered the question of the Commission as a question quite separate from that of the foreign occupation.

The difficulty for the Commission is to obtain unanimity, and if that is required, no time can be fixed when it may be obtained.

But if M. Thouvenel will agree that a majority shall bind the minority, the business of the Commission may be finished in a fortnight. The sentence upon the Druses has been pronounced, and the executions of Damascus need not be revived.

It would be a task beyond the power of any Commission to appease the hatreds of Maronites and Druses. But the fear of a renewed occupation will act as well upon the Turkish authorities as upon the hostile tribes; and the presence of the French army in Syria in 1860 will have stayed the progress of massacre, and inspired a wholesome dread for the future.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

P.S.—Your Excellency will read this despatch to M. Thouvenel, and will give him a copy of it if desired.

No. 445.

Lord J. Russell to Earl Cowley.

(No. 239.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, February 28, 1861.

ON reading over again your Excellency's despatch No. 254 of the 19th instant, I have to say that Her Majesty's Government will not object to fix the duration of the Convention to the 1st of May, it being understood that the Commission are to decide forthwith by a majority as to the future government of the Lebanon; and that, if necessary, the Conference may meet again in April, in order to receive the Report of the Commission.

Her Majesty's Government are not prepared to sanction the continuance of the foreign occupation till the 1st of June.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 446.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received March 2.)

(No. 309.)

My Lord,

Paris, March 1, 1861.

I HAD the honour to receive this morning your Lordship's despatches Nos. 238 and 239 of the 27th and 28th ultimo, relative to the Syrian question.

I read the former of these, as desired, to M. Thouvenel, and at his request have furnished him with a copy of it.

M. Thouvenel said that he concurred in your Lordship's opinion that it would be exceedingly difficult to obtain unanimity of sentiment among the members of the Commission sitting at Beyrout. He could not, he continued, desire M. Béclard to submit to the decision of the majority on points on which he entertained a conscientious opinion, but he had written to him to say that as it was not the Beyrout Commission which was to settle the future government of the Lebanon, their province being confined to offering advice with respect to it, it was not in his judgment necessary that their Report should represent an unanimous conclusion. All that M. Béclard need do would be to state his own opinions in the Report. The Report might then be sent to Constantinople, and he had no doubt that the Porte and the Representatives of the Great Powers

would soon settle the points on which there might be a difference of feeling among the Commissioners.

With respect to the main question at issue, namely, the evacuation of Syria, M. Thouvenel said that as soon as the other Representatives should be in possession of their new instructions he would summon another Conference, but he gave me to understand that his own occupations, and the necessity of attending the discussions in the Senate, would retard the reassembling of the Conference until the middle of next week, and he expressed the hope that this delay would not be objected to by your Lordship.

On returning home it struck me that the Conference ought not to meet later than the 5th instant, as the Convention of the 5th of September will expire on that day.

I should be glad if your Lordship would inform me by telegraph of your wishes on this point.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

No. 447.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received March 2.)

No. 310. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Paris, March 1, 1861.

WITH reference to my preceding despatch I have the honour to state, that I had yesterday and to-day some confidential conversation with M. Thouvenel with respect to the solution of the Syrian question. M. Thouvenel's object was to induce me to consent to the prolongation of the occupation until the 1st of June. I said that your Lordship's instructions were imperative as to the occupation ceasing on the 1st of May.

But, as I had remarked in your Lordship's telegram of the 23rd ultimo to Lord Bloomfield, copy of which was inclosed in your Lordship's despatch No. 223 of the 23rd ultimo, that you would not object, under conditions, to prolong the stay of the French troops to the 1st of June, I asked M. Thouvenel, without, however, giving his Excellency any intimation that this prolongation might be possible, what guarantee he could offer that the troops would then be positively withdrawn.

M. Thouvenel replied that a short Convention might be drawn up, simply stating that, after an exchange of opinions, the Plenipotentiaries had come to the conclusion that the occupation might be usefully prolonged for three months, and that it was accordingly so prolonged. "You will thus," said M. Thouvenel, "have it in your own hands to constrain us to go." "Yes," I replied, "but probably to be met by the same arguments for staying as you are making use of now."

M. Thouvenel said that he could not consent to sign a Convention which would declare before the whole world that under no circumstances could the terms of the Convention be further prolonged. It would be derogatory to France to do so. "But will you," I asked him, "give me in writing, for the satisfaction of Her Majesty's Government, a declaration that your troops shall have retired by the 1st of June?" "I cannot do that," rejoined M. Thouvenel, "but I will, if you please it, give you a declaration in writing that the troops shall be withdrawn as soon as ever there shall be an organised Government in the Lebanon."

I replied, that M. Thouvenel must be well aware that three months would more than suffice to enable the Porte to establish a Government in the Lebanon, if no obstacles were to be thrown in the way by foreign Powers. "But the fact is," I said, "you want to have everything your own way, and the more concessions we make, the more you require of us. The reason why Her Majesty's Government were desirous of avoiding the occupation altogether last year was under the apprehension that it would lead to the consequences which we now see. And even now they are willing to meet your wishes for a prolongation of the occupation; but they must be assured that this concession is not to lead to further demands. You will not meet them half-

way. Well, then, there is nothing for it but to abide by our original engagement."

M. Thouvenel replied, that he agreed with me that three months ought to suffice for the reorganization of the Government of the Lebanon, and that if he demurred to any positive engagement that the French troops would be withdrawn within that time, it was because a state of things might arise in the meanwhile which might render, by the common consent of all the parties interested, that evacuation impossible. Why not, then, extend the period of occupation in the way which he had suggested, and which, he repeated, put it in the power of Her Majesty's Government to enforce the withdrawal of the troops when that period should have expired?

It would be a waste of time to prolong this despatch further. My answer was a mere repetition of what I had said before, for in truth there is nothing new to be said.

I have not made use of the suggestion mentioned in your Lordship's despatch No. 239, because I feel sure that it will not meet with the assent of the French Government.

M. Thouvenel gave me to understand that some proposal for the prolongation of the occupation for three months would be made by the Prussian Plenipotentiary at the ensuing Conference. Unless otherwise instructed, I shall continue to insist on the 1st of May being the time beyond which Her Majesty's Government will not agree to prolong it.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

No. 448.

Lord J. Russell to Earl Cowley.

(No. 247.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, March 2, 1861.

ON reading your Excellency's despatches No. 309 and 310 of the 1st instant I was struck with the indefinite nature of the engagement to be proposed by M. Thouvenel for the continuance of the European occupation in Syria.

There seems no reason for prolonging the foreign occupation for a definite time, if at the end of that time the question is to recur in the same shape in which it now stands. It appears, therefore, to Her Majesty's Government that the better course will be to abide by the Convention as it stands.

The opinion of the Turkish Government has already been stated. The Sultan has declared, through his Representative at Paris, that His Imperial Majesty is ready to undertake the protection of the inhabitants of the Lebanon of all races and creeds.

Such being the case, and the proposal for a prolongation to the 1st of May having been rejected by M. Thouvenel at the last Conference, your Excellency is instructed not to agree to any prolongation of the occupation sanctioned by the Convention of the 5th of September.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 449.

Lord J. Russell to Earl Cowley.

(No. 248.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, March 2, 1861.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 247 of this date, relating to the evacuation of Syria, your Excellency is instructed to say that the arrangements to be made for the evacuation of Syria will, of course, require a month or six weeks before the evacuation can be complete.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

Lord J. Russell to Lord Dufferin.

(No. 72.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, March 2, 1861.

IT appears from your Lordship's telegram of the 25th ultimo, which reached me this morning, that you had come to the conclusion that the evidence produced on the trial of Said Bey Djumblat at Beyrout had failed to establish his guilt.

In such a state of things I cannot doubt that your Lordship would have interposed to prevent the execution of the sentence of death passed upon that Chief by the Tribunal by which he was tried; and Her Majesty's Government trust that your efforts, although made on your own responsibility, will have proved successful.

I think it nevertheless right to instruct you, without a moment's delay, to insist with Fuad Pasha that Said Bey Djumblat shall not be executed.

I am, &c.

(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

Lord J. Russell to Sir H. Bulwer.

(No. 132.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, March 2, 1861.

IT appears from a telegram of the 25th ultimo, which reached me this morning, that Lord Dufferin had come to the conclusion that the evidence produced on the trial of Said Bey Djumblat at Beyrout had failed to establish his guilt.

In such a state of things I cannot doubt that Lord Dufferin will have interposed to prevent the execution of the sentence of death passed upon that Chief by the Tribunal by which he was tried; and Her Majesty's Government trust that his efforts, although made on his own responsibility, will have proved successful.

I have thought it nevertheless right to instruct Lord Dufferin, without a moment's delay, to insist with Fuad Pasha that Said Bey Djumblat shall not be executed; and your Excellency, as I have already instructed you by telegraph to do, will make a communication to the same effect to the Porte.

I am, &c.

(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

Sir H. Bulwer to Lord J. Russell.—(Received March 2.)

(No. 123.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, February 15, 1861.

I HAVE informed Aali Pasha, in obedience to your Lordship's telegram of the 8th instant, that Her Majesty's Government are of opinion that the execution of one or two Druse Chiefs implicated in the massacre of Christians would satisfy public justice, and that the French Government concurred in this opinion.

His Highness telegraphed at once to Fuad Pasha upon the subject, and I likewise communicated your Lordship's telegram to Lord Dufferin with the least possible delay.

I have, &c.

(Signed) HENRY L. BULWER.

Sir H. Bulwer to Lord J. Russell.—(Received March 2.)

(No. 132.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, February 18, 1861.

FOR the last few days the French Ambassador has been actively employed in endeavouring to advise the Porte to desist from its demand for the immediate evacuation of Syria, and, if I am rightly informed, nothing has been spared to effect this object.

Your Lordship will remember that long before a loan was contracted in France I pointed out the probability that such a loan would, if the Turkish finances were not otherwise arranged, be a probable occurrence, and that if it finally took place it would give the French Government an immense hold over this one.

The Ottoman Ministry has in fact been led to imagine that the recent refusal of the Bank of France to discount the bills of M. Mirès is connected with the evacuation of Syria, and that on its decision will depend the facilities it may meet with in regard to its monetary difficulties.

This view of the matter, whether correct or not, has not been lost sight of by those who have felt an interest in engaging the Grand Vizier and Aali Pasha to depart from their first intentions; and at one moment especially, after a despatch from Ahmet Vefyk Efendi, stating that France, Russia, and Prussia, would insist on the prolongation of the occupation, I thought it not unlikely that the Turkish Cabinet would abandon its design of demanding the immediate execution of the Treaty of September, and consent, without making such a demand, to a certain prolongation of the French occupation.

I thought it right, however, to inform Aali Pasha clearly of the manner in which I should regard such conduct.

I said that if the Sultan's Government were not certain of maintaining the tranquillity of Syria, then it ought frankly to say so and enter into arrangements suitable to such a condition of things; but that if, on the contrary, it retained the conviction it had so often expressed that the presence of a French army in Syria rather prevented than favoured the settlement of that country, then it was bound in duty, both to its own subjects and to Europe, to declare its opinion without reserve, and require the honest execution of the engagements that had been entered into with it.

I added that Aali Pasha had to remember that he had for some time past been constantly urging Her Majesty's Government to support the determination on this subject which, after due deliberation, he said he had maturely arrived at; that but a few days since he had told me, in the most distinct and positive manner, that nothing could induce him to swerve from that determination, and that, consequently, if the Porte, after having thus engaged your Lordship to support its policy, were now, without some clear and powerful reason (such a sense of its own insufficiency to maintain order) to change that policy, it would thereby rouse the indignation of those whom it had deceived, and induce them to consider that all reliance on or interest in it was for the future out of the question.

Aali Pasha said that his resolutions had undergone no change; but that it was also to be considered that the French had come, professedly as friends, to assist the Sultan, and that, consequently, the Sultan's Government did not like to behave in a manner that could fairly be considered unfriendly or offensive.

His view, therefore, was to persist in demanding the immediate evacuation; but to allow of a short delay if valid reasons were brought forward in favour of it.

Finally, in a long conversation I had with his Highness last night, relative to this matter, the conclusion was this: first, that the Ottoman Ambassador should demand the immediate evacuation, and say that the Porte was ready to take the responsibility of maintaining order and peace in Syria; secondly, that the evacuation being once decided on and agreed to, the mode of executing it would then be considered; thirdly, that if at that time the French Government were to prove the impossibility or great danger and inconvenience of the whole of the French force being at once and immediately embarked, that the Turkish Ambassador at Paris, after consulting with Her Majesty's Ambassador, with

whom, on account of the agreement of opinion between the two Governments, he was bound to act in concert, should have the power to consent to allow two months for the complete evacuation of the Ottoman territory—which evacuation, however, should commence immediately, and take place continuously, and with as little delay as circumstances admitted of.

It strikes me, upon the whole, that this arrangement is not a bad one: on the one hand, the Porte will demand the immediate evacuation of Syria, and declare its readiness to assume the responsibility of governing it; on the other hand, its claim in this respect being fully established, it will not carry that claim into execution with an abruptness which France, considering all the circumstances, might regard as unnecessary and hostile.

But I think it most material that the immediate evacuation should be demanded and consented to as the first step in the proceeding; that any delay in evacuating should be justified by an adequate motive, and confined within a short and precise period; and that, moreover, it should commence at once, and thus afford a proof that it is intended *bonâ fide* to complete the arrangement by the time specified.

I inclose to your Lordship the telegram which I sent to Lord Cowley this morning on this subject, Aali Pasha having approved of its contents; so that no mistake can, I trust occur, as to the course which the Porte has enjoined its Ambassador to adopt.

Aali Pasha, moreover, after our interview on Sunday night, sent another telegram to Ahmet Vefyk, enjoining him especially to see Lord Cowley, and act as much as possible in conformity with the views of his Lordship.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY L. BULWER.

P.S.—As Baron Prokesch has received information that his Government goes with us in the Syrian question, there must have been some mistake as to Vefyk's despatch; and I am inclined to think that a part, at least, of the information which the Porte got was from M. de Lavalette, but the name of Vefyk was mentioned—the Porte believing what it had heard, but not liking to state the real source of its intelligence.

H. L. B.

Inclosure in No. 453.

Sir H. Bulwer to Earl Cowley.

(Translation.)

Constantinople, February 18, 1861, 2 A.M.

I HAVE just seen Aali. Instructions are given to Vefyk to insist on the fulfilment of the Treaty and to declare the Porte ready to assume alone the responsibility of governing Syria, without a foreign force. This point established, if any difficulties as to the instant evacuation are started, Vefyk is to allow two months for its gradual accomplishment, but the whole force is to have left Syria within that time. Vefyk is to consult with you on this point.

The French Ambassador wanted the Porte not to insist on the evacuation in the first instance, but to agree at once to defer the departure of the French troops.

This Aali declined.

Will you inform Lord John?

No. 454.

Lord Bloomfield to Lord J. Russell.—(Received March 4.)

(No. 66.)

My Lord,

Vienna, February 28, 1861.

SHORTLY after receiving your Lordship's telegram of the 23rd instant, I met Count Rechberg, and told his Excellency that Her Majesty's Government agreed with the Austrian Government, that it was for the Porte to decide as to the necessity of a prolonged occupation of Syria. I also stated to his Excellency that if the occupation were continued till the 1st of June, it should be done under conditions, and with a view to the complete restoration of the Sultan's authority in Syria.

Count Rechberg, who had been most anxious to know the opinion of Her Majesty's Government on the point that had given rise to a warm discussion in the Conference at Paris, was much pleased to learn the identity of the views of the two Governments in the present phase of the Syrian question, and your Lordship will have been informed by the telegram recorded in my despatch No. 57 of the 25th instant, that Prince Metternich is instructed to concert with Her Majesty's Ambassador at Paris as to any future discussions in this matter.

His Excellency said that on the rising of the Conference held at Paris last week, in which the Turkish Plenipotentiary spoke in strong terms against the occupation of Syria beyond the term stipulated by the Convention, and had been powerfully supported in this opinion by Her Majesty's Ambassador, M. Thouvenel had sent for Prince Metternich and the Turkish Plenipotentiary, to propose that the troops should commence embarking on their return home on the 1st of May, and have completely evacuated the Turkish territory by the 1st of June. This proposition, Count Rechberg said, had not been agreed to by the Emperor, and had thus fallen to the ground, and when I last saw his Excellency he was unable to give me any further indication of the projects of the French Government. His own wishes on the subject, however, appear to be simple enough, viz., to oppose any unnecessary prolongation of the French occupation.

I have, &c.
(Signed) BLOOMFIELD.

No. 455.

Lord A. Loftus to Lord J. Russell.—(Received March 4.)

(No. 42.)

My Lord,

Berlin, March 2, 1861.

THE Prince de la Tour d'Auvergne, the French Minister at this Court, has communicated to Baron Schleinitz a despatch from his Government referring to the discussion which had taken place at the late Conference held at Paris with respect to the prolonged occupation of Syria, and explaining the grounds on which the French Government proposed that measure.

As a copy of this despatch (which appears to bear the character of a circular) will probably have been placed in your Lordship's hands, it is not necessary for me to refer to it further than to remark that it is both moderate and conciliatory in substance and in tone.

In conversing with Baron Schleinitz on this question, his Excellency remarked that there were two points on which the Prussian Cabinet agreed with Her Majesty's Government, and that there were two points wherein they concurred with the French Government.

The two former were:—

1. They considered that a strictly-defined limit should be assigned to that occupation: and,

2. That the decision with respect to the prolonged occupation must be determined by unanimity, and not by the majority of the votes, in the Conference.

Baron Schleinitz further maintains the opinion that the occupation cannot be prolonged without the consent of the Sultan.

The two points in which the Prussian Government concur with France are:—

1. They recognize a connection between the Commission and the Convention, both tending to the same end, namely, the pacification of Syria, the one in a moral, the latter in a physical, sense; and,

2. They are of opinion that the occupation cannot at present cease without inspiring danger for the peace and security of that province. Baron Schleinitz is further of opinion that it would not be desirable in the interest of Turkey that the withdrawal of the French troops should take place in a manner mortifying to the susceptibility of the French nation, for a strong opinion had been expressed in the French Legislative Chamber on this subject, and he, therefore, considered that it would not be politic to place the Government of the Emperor in a position of difficulty as regarded the public opinion of the country.

Under these circumstances Baron Schleinitz was of opinion that some compromise might be proposed which would harmonize the divergent opinions of the English and French Cabinets; but, before taking any step in that sense, he was anxious to learn the opinion of Her Majesty's Government, as it would entirely depend on their wishes and acceptance of his proposal whether he should give effect to it or not.

The proposal of Baron Schleinitz, as I have had the honour to report to your Lordship to-day by telegram, is: "That a term of four months, that is, till the 1st of July, shall be definitively fixed for the prolongation of the occupation, at the end of which term the French troops shall be withdrawn."

He has reason to believe that this proposal will be accepted by the French Government, and he considers that the period so fixed will allow ample time for the Commission to terminate its labours, and for the establishment of a responsible administrative government for the Mountain.

If Her Majesty's Government are prepared to agree to this proposal, Baron Schleinitz declares his readiness to make a formal proposition to that effect. If, on the other hand, Her Majesty's Government do not give their adhesion to it, Baron Schleinitz considers that it will not be desirable that Prussia should abandon the passive position which she has hitherto maintained on this question.

I venture to observe to your Lordship that should the proposal of Baron Schleinitz prove acceptable to Her Majesty's Government, it will have the advantage of placing Prussia completely on the side of England in case it may fail to meet with the concurrence of the French Government.

I have, &c.
(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

No. 456.

Lord J. Russell to Sir H. Bulwer.

(No. 138.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, March 5, 1861.

I REQUESTED your Excellency, by my telegram of the 28th instant, to inform me whether the Sultan had changed his mind in regard to the departure of the French troops from Syria, which, at the desire of the Turkish Ambassador, Her Majesty's Government have been urging; and I informed you on the following day, by the like means, that Her Majesty's Government were ready to support the Sultan if he made no change in his policy in that respect, but remained firm to his purpose of requiring the evacuation of that province.

Your Excellency's telegram of the 2nd instant announced that the Sultan's determination was unchanged; and I apprized you on the following day that Lord Cowley had been informed that Her Majesty's Government could not agree to any new Convention in regard to the occupation of Syria, although they were aware that the evacuation could hardly be completed in less than a month or six weeks.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 457.

Lord J. Russell to Lord A. Loftus.

(No. 26.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, March 5, 1861.

I HAVE received your Lordship's despatch No. 42 of the 2nd instant, reporting a proposal which Baron Schleinitz had made to you for determining the duration of the French occupation of Syria, the substance of which you had already communicated to me in your telegraphic despatch of that day. Her Majesty's Government regret that they cannot agree with the Prussian proposition.

The same difficulty would arise at the end of four months as that which now occurs.

Baron Schleinitz wishes not to wound the susceptibility of the French nation and the French Legislative Body, but this would be also a reason for perpetual occupation; while Her Majesty's Government consider that the susceptibility of England and of the House of Commons have also some claim to be consulted.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 458.

Lord J. Russell to Earl Cowley.

(No. 261.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, March 5, 1861.

THE Count de Flahault called on me yesterday, and stated that he was instructed by M. Thouvenel to ask me for an explanation in regard to the views of Her Majesty's Government on the question of the evacuation of Syria, as set forth in my despatch No. 238 of the 27th ultimo, of which your Excellency had given a copy to M. Thouvenel.

I told Count de Flahault that Her Majesty's Government could not be party to any secret understanding in regard to the period at which the French troops should depart from Syria. Any arrangement on that subject must be patent and public, and no arrangement could be accepted by Her Majesty's Government which would involve the prolongation of the French occupation beyond the 1st of May next.

If no such arrangement could be made Her Majesty's Government were of opinion that the only alternative was to adhere strictly to the period specified in the Convention of the 5th of September.

In my despatch No. 247 of the 2nd instant I stated to your Excellency that as M. Thouvenel had at the last Conference rejected a proposal for prolonging the occupation to the 1st of May, you were not to agree to any prolongation of it whatever beyond the period sanctioned by the Convention of the 5th of September; but I added in another despatch of the same date that your Excellency would state that the arrangements to be made for the evacuation would of course require a month or six weeks before that operation could be completed.

Your Excellency, therefore, giving the most liberal interpretation to the limit of time thus prescribed to you, namely, so much only as might be required for completing the evacuation, might assent to an engagement on the part of the French Government which should assign any period not longer than the 1st of May for the departure of the French troops from Syria; but your Excellency will not agree to extend that period to the 1st of June, or indeed to any other date beyond the 1st of May; and Her Majesty's Government have reason to suppose that the Turkish Plenipotentiary will receive instructions to support the course taken by your Excellency.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 459.

Lord J. Russell to Sir H. Bulwer.

(No. 141.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, March 6, 1861.

I TRANSMIT, for your Lordship's information, a copy of a despatch from Thouvenel to M. de Flahault,* which is referred to in my instruction to Earl Cowley No. 238 of the 27th of February, of which I sent you a copy in my despatch No. 117 of the 28th of February.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 460.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received March 6.)

(No. 327.)

My Lord,

Paris, March 5, 1861.

I OBSERVE by M. Thouvenel's despatch to M. de Flahault of the 25th ultimo, inclosed in copy in your Lordship's despatch No. 253 of the 4th instant, that you have been furnished with a copy of the draft of Protocol of the Conference on Syrian affairs held on the 19th instant.

M. Thouvenel ought not to have made use of this document, which has not as yet received the sanction of the Conference. It states the French case very accurately, but not the replies given either by the Turkish Ambassador or myself. I am only waiting for the next meeting of the Conference to have my own observations properly reported, and I believe that Vefyk Efendi has also observations to make.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

No. 461.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received March 6.)

(No. 328.)

My Lord,

Paris, March 5, 1861.

I HAVE had the honour to receive your Lordship's telegram dated 2 P.M. this day. If M. Thouvenel, in his despatch to M. de Flahault, to which your Lordship therein alludes, has stated that I offered to enter into any agreement to prolong the occupation until the 1st of June, he has entirely misrepresented me. What passed between us is correctly reported in my despatches Nos. 309 and 310 of the 1st instant. I have invariably held the same language to him and to my colleagues,—that my instructions were positive, and that I could consent to no prolongation beyond the 1st of May.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

No. 462.

Lord J. Russell to Earl Cowley.

(No. 269.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, March 6, 1861.

I HAVE to state to your Excellency, in reply to your despatch No. 327 of yesterday, that although mention is made in M. Thouvenel's despatch of the 25th ultimo, of which a copy was transmitted to you in my despatch No. 253 of the 4th instant, of a draft of Protocol as inclosed in it, Count Flahault did not furnish me with a copy of that draft, but merely with a copy of the despatch.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

* No. 440.

No. 463.

Lord J. Russell to Earl Cowley.

(No. 270.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, March 6, 1861.

I HAVE to observe to your Excellency, with reference to your despatch No. 328 of the 5th instant, that Count de Flahault, at the interview which I had with him on the 4th instant, did not state that your Excellency had offered to enter into any agreement to prolong the Syrian occupation until the 1st of June. Count de Flahault merely inquired whether I would consent to that date.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 464.

Lord J. Russell to Earl Cowley.

(No. 271.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, March 6, 1861.

M. MUSURUS has stated to me that he has been informed by Aali Pasha that the French Ambassador at Constantinople is very urgent with the Porte in order to obtain its consent to the prolongation, until the 5th of June next, of the French occupation of Syria, and that the Turkish Plenipotentiary in Paris has accordingly been instructed, in the event of M. Thouvenel equally insisting at Paris upon such an arrangement, to come to a previous understanding with your Excellency on that point.

I have to instruct your Excellency to acquaint Vefyk Efendi that you are prohibited by your instructions from assenting to the prolongation of the occupation to the 5th of June; and that, with reference to the communication made to me by M. Musurus, Her Majesty's Government expect that Vefyk Efendi will hold the same language as that prescribed to your Excellency.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 465.

Aali Pasha to M. Musurus.—(Communicated to Lord J. Russell by M. Musurus, March 6.)

(Télégraphique.)

Constantinople, le 4 Mars, 1861.

DES instructions positives ont été données à Vefyk Efendi, lui prescrivant d'agir tout-à-fait d'accord avec son collègue d'Angleterre sur la question de l'évacuation. Comme les Français à Constantinople paraissent tenir absolument à la prolongation jusqu'au 5 du mois de Juin, notre Plénipotentiaire, en cas qu'on insiste aussi beaucoup à Paris, s'entendra au préalable avec Lord Cowley sur ce point.

No. 466.

Lord J. Russell to Earl Cowley.

(No. 272.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, March 6, 1861.

I UNDERSTAND from the Count de Flahault that M. Thouvenel proposes to assemble the Conference on Saturday or Monday. I will give your Excellency to-morrow, by messenger, precise instructions as to the course you are to pursue in that Conference.

In the meantime your Excellency will guide yourself by my directions in No. 271 of this day.

I transmit, confidentially, a copy of the telegraphic despatch of Aali Pasha.*

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 467.

Lord J. Russell to Earl Cowley.

(No. 274.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, March 7, 1861.

THE Count de Flahault called upon me yesterday at the Foreign Office, and communicated to me the views of the Imperial Government respecting the occupation of Syria.

If I rightly understood those views they are to the following effect. M. Thouvenel considers that the British and Ottoman Government propose:—

1. That the term of the foreign occupation shall be fixed and definite, instead of being contingent and uncertain.

2. That the term of evacuation shall not be later than the 1st of May.

M. Thouvenel is ready to agree to the first of these conditions, provided that the term fixed by the second should be extended so far as to afford a reasonable prospect of the completion of the organization of the Lebanon, which has been entrusted to the Commission at Beyrout.

M. Thouvenel therefore proposes that the period of evacuation shall be extended to the 5th of June.

It appears from your telegram that the Turkish Ambassador at Paris has instructions to agree to this extension, if it is clearly stipulated that the evacuation shall have taken place by that time, and if this proposal shall have the concurrence of Her Majesty's Government.

The Austrian Minister, Count Rechberg, is willing to admit a prolongation which will have the sanction of the territorial Sovereign, the Sultan.

Baron Schleinitz informs Her Majesty's Government that M. Thouvenel stated to the Prussian Minister at Paris that there would be no objection to insert in the fresh Convention a formula, providing that the preparations for evacuation shall commence in May, so as to be completed by the 5th of June. Baron Schleinitz considers that the French Government evince, by this proposal, an accommodating spirit.

All these circumstances have been carefully weighed by Her Majesty's Government. They consider that if the vague and indefinite proposal made by M. Thouvenel is changed into one of a fixed and positive character, and the change of period is not greater than from the 1st of May to the 5th of June, the main object of the British and Turkish Governments will be gained. It is to be observed that without any new stipulations the execution of the provisions of the 5th of September could hardly be carried into effect before the end of April or the beginning of May. They desire, moreover, to co-operate, as far as possible, with the Powers of Europe, and to show on their side a conciliatory disposition.

I have to instruct you, therefore, to be prepared to accede to the proposal of the French Government, provided it is expressed in the clear and precise terms which are contained in the draft Convention transmitted as an inclosure in this despatch; and provided that by no condition, direct or indirect, expressed or implied, it is to be agreed to, or understood to be agreed to, that the fulfilment of the positive engagement that the evacuation is to be completed by the 5th of June is to depend upon anything other than a faithful and honourable execution of the words of the Convention.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

Inclosure in No. 467.

Draft of Convention.

HIS Imperial Majesty the Sultan having, in concert with their Majesties the Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, the Emperor of

* No. 465.

Austria, the Emperor of the French, the King of Prussia, and the Emperor of all the Russias, deemed it expedient to prolong the period of six months fixed by Article V of the Convention of the 5th day of September, 1860, for the occupation of Syria by European troops, their said Majesties have resolved to conclude a further Convention to that effect, and have named as their Plenipotentiaries, that is to say, &c., &c.

ARTICLE I.

The duration of the occupation of Syria by European troops shall be prolonged until the 5th day of June of the present year; it being distinctly agreed between the High Contracting Parties that such occupation shall have ceased and shall have ended on that day, and that the whole of the European troops engaged in such occupation shall have actually embarked on or before the said 5th day of June of the present year, and shall have proceeded on their voyage home from the coast of Syria.

ARTICLE II.

The provisions of Article II of the Convention of the 5th day of September, 1860, shall continue in force during the period which intervenes between the date of the signature of the present Convention and the 5th day of June of the present year, in so far as they have not been already carried into execution, or are not modified by the provisions of the present Convention.

ARTICLE III.

The present Convention shall be ratified, &c.

No. 468.

Lord J. Russell to Earl Cowley.

(Separate.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, March 7, 1861.

YOU will inform Vefyk Efendi that if he shall depart in any way from the proposal contained in my despatch No. 274 of this date, and shall show an inclination to extend the period of occupation, you are instructed to leave the Conference, and Her Majesty's Government will report his conduct to his Government at Constantinople. If he is disposed to sell Syria for the Mirès loan, neither the British nor the Ottoman Government are willing to consent to such a bargain.

It is to be hoped that his stay at Paris will not be long.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 469.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received March 8.)

(No. 336.)

My Lord,

Paris, March 7, 1861.

I HAD the honour to inform your Lordship by telegram early yesterday morning, that M. Thouvenel had stated that the Porte was willing to consent to the prolongation of the occupation of Syria to the 5th of June next. As this was in contradiction with the latest advices which I had received from Sir H. Bulwer, I informed that Ambassador of M. Thouvenel's statement, and requested to be informed whether it was true. I have not yet received his Excellency's answer.

Later yesterday I saw Vefyk Efendi. He read me an instruction which had just reached him from Constantinople, of which the inclosed is the translation. He said, that from the conversations which he had had with M. Thouvenel, he did not think that the French Minister would consent to introduce a stipulation into

the new Convention, absolutely binding the French Government to have withdrawn the troops of occupation by the 5th of June. I replied that such was my impression also, and that, moreover, my instructions would preclude me from consenting to any arrangement which would not insure the departure of the troops by the 1st of May. Vefyk Efendi rejoined that he had referred to his Government for further instructions, and that he had expressed the opinion that it would be better to extend the period of occupation beyond the 5th of June, if the certain departure of the troops could thereby be insured.

I observed that Her Majesty's Government were placed in a most invidious position by these vacillations, and I again reminded Vefyk Efendi that it had been at the repeated demand of the Turkish Representative in London that Her Majesty's Government had so energetically insisted on the strict observation of the Convention of the 5th of September. Vefyk Efendi immediately said, that his Government had on this account desired him to take no step whatever without my concurrence, and therefore that he should say nothing on the subject to M. Thouvenel unless I approved. I replied that the mischief was already done, for that M. Thouvenel had announced that the Porte consented to the prolongation of the occupation to the 5th of June. Vefyk Efendi answered that it must have been through M. de Lavalette that M. Thouvenel had received this information.

Vefyk Efendi then, as he had done on a previous occasion, adverted to the difficulties attending the completion of the Mirès loan, and, as before, he showed a desire to treat that and the Syrian question together. He said that until he had received the amount of the sums subscribed to the loan, which he maintains a little assistance on the part of the Government here would enable him to do, he would not attend a Conference, and that he should so inform M. Thouvenel. I replied that I could not follow him upon that ground, and I recommended him to be very cautious in refusing a Conference; for it might be that the French Government would be glad to avoid one, but would still maintain their occupation, putting off the evacuation by excuses from week to week and from month to month.

Vefyk Efendi, on hearing these objections, promised to abstain from opposing a meeting of the Conference; but such is the pecuniary embarrassment under which the Porte is labouring in consequence of the state of M. Mirès' affairs that I feel sure the Turkish Government, if left to themselves, will enter into any arrangement that it may please the French Government to dictate, provided the latter will aid them in obtaining money.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

Inclosure in No. 469.

Aali Pasha to Vefyk Effendi.

(Translation from the Turkish.)

LE Gouvernement Ottoman n'a jamais compris l'utilité de réunir la Conférence pour examiner la question de l'embarquement des troupes; et encore moins celle des travaux de la Commission. Nous ne consentirons jamais que les affaires de la Commission entrent d'aucune manière dans la question de Convention. Si cependant il n'est pas possible de s'arranger autrement pour éviter d'en venir au point d'une rupture il faudrait s'entendre pour une nouvelle Convention pour le nouveau délai sur le commencement du mois de Juin, mais sans jamais s'engager à une nouvelle réunion de Conférence, à aucune condition regardant les travaux de la Commission. Il faudra clairement stipuler pour que l'évacuation sera exécutée le 5 Juin définitivement.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received March 8.)

(No. 337. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Paris, March 7, 1861.

WHILE with M. Thouvenel upon other business this morning, his Excellency said that he had received a telegram yesterday evening from M. de Flahault, stating that Her Majesty's Government were not indisposed to accept the term of the 5th of June for the final evacuation of Syria, and that your Lordship desired that the Conference should not meet before Monday, in order that you might have time to furnish me with fresh instructions.

I replied, that your Lordship had also informed me that I might expect instructions upon the subject very shortly.

M. Thouvenel went on to say, that he had every reason to believe that the Porte would consent to adopt the period of the 5th of June; and that if this should be the case, he hoped that the Turkish Plenipotentiary would himself propose at the next Conference the prolongation of the occupation to that date. It would simplify matters, and obviate the necessity of any renewed discussion.

I replied that, provided all parties were agreed beforehand, it might be desirable that the proposal so agreed upon should be made by the Porte. My instructions, I added, up to the present moment, precluded my assenting to any longer delay in the evacuation than the 1st of May, and I felt quite certain that if Her Majesty's Government were disposed to consent to any further delay, it would only be under a distinct engagement that at the period fixed the troops of occupation shall have been actually withdrawn. To such an engagement, however, M. Thouvenel does not seem to be willing to subscribe. He said that he had drawn up a project of Convention, which he had given to Vefyk Efendi to send to Constantinople. (I would beg your Lordship to remark here that although Vefyk Efendi states himself to be instructed to concert all his measures with me, he has not informed me, as he ought to have done, of the existence of this project of Convention.) This Convention would be a short one. The Preamble would state that the Powers interested, after an exchange of opinions, had resolved, on the proposal of the Porte, that the occupation should be prolonged for three months, i.e., to the 5th of June, "époque à laquelle l'évacuation devra être effectuée." I remarked that the word "devra" was hardly conclusive enough to my mind. Did M. Thouvenel, I asked, understand by it that the troops were actually to be gone from Syria on the 5th of June?

After a little hesitation, M. Thouvenel said, "My meaning is this. You want a final period fixed at which our troops are to withdraw. We, on the other hand, want the security of a settled Government in the Lebanon before the evacuation takes place. We do not doubt that within three months such a Government can be installed. It may, however, be a few days sooner or a few days later. Provided, then, that our transports are on the coast of Syria by the 5th of June, and that we thus give an earnest of our intentions of withdrawing, we ought not to be tied to a day. You, however, wish for a positive engagement that our troops shall be withdrawn at a certain date. You have that engagement in the new Convention, which you can enforce when you please. That is your security. But we can put nothing more positive into the Convention than what I have stated to you, nor can we, under any circumstances, bind ourselves not to summon the Conference again."

I thought it my duty, under the instructions which I possess, to express to M. Thouvenel my conviction that the proposal which he had made would not be satisfactory to Her Majesty's Government. I would say no more for the present, I added, as to-morrow or next day I should probably be in possession of your Lordship's instructions. At all events, I said, the Conference had better not meet before Monday.

M. Thouvenel, who seemed exceedingly annoyed by the doubts which I threw on the acquiescence of Her Majesty's Government in the course which he proposed to pursue, replied, that as under the circumstances of the case further discussion between the two Governments seemed inevitable, he should not convoke the Conference before Tuesday or Wednesday.

In the course of this conversation I observed that the publication of Prince Gortchakoff's despatches to the Russian Representatives at Paris and Constanti-

nople with reference to the evacuation of Syria would not contribute towards the solution of the question, for they contained, in fact, arguments which, if agreed in, would perpetuate the occupation for ever. M. Thouvenel expressed himself to be of a similar opinion.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

No. 471.

Lord J. Russell to Earl Cowley.

(No. 282.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, March 8, 1861.

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatches Nos. 336 and 337 of yesterday, reporting your further communications with M. Thouvenel and the Turkish Ambassador respecting Syria; and I have to state to you, in reply, that I have at present nothing to add to the instructions which I addressed to you yesterday on that subject in my despatch No. 274.

Her Majesty's Government cannot assent to the occupation of Syria by French troops on terms less stringent than those which are stated in that instruction.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 472.

Lord J. Russell to Earl Cowley.

(No. 287.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, March 9, 1861.

THE Count de Flahault has been with me this morning. He stated that the only point of importance in our view of the Syrian question was the evacuation at a fixed date, and that the reasons upon which M. Thouvenel founded his consent to a fixed date did not concern us.

I said the only thing to which I had instructed you to hold firmly was the clear and positive designation of the day, namely, the 5th of June, upon which the French troops shall have evacuated Syria.

He made some criticisms upon the words "shall have evacuated," but on my observing that the complete evacuation was a positive thing, upon which there could be no dispute, while preparations for the commencement of the evacuation, &c., would admit of cavil and difference of opinion, he made no further objection.

The rest of our conversation turned upon other subjects.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 473.

Aali Pasha to M. Musurus.—(Communicated to Lord J. Russell by M. Musurus, March 9.)

(Télégraphique.)

Constantinople, le 8 Mars, 1861.

RECU votre télégramme du 7.

Les instructions de Vefyk Efendi ne l'autorisent qu'à adhérer à un délai définitif jusqu'au 5 Juin et cela après s'être entendu avec Lord Cowley. Ce qu'il a dit à l'Ambassadeur Anglais sur son intention d'accorder, au besoin, un délai plus long est tout-à-fait contraire à la lettre et à l'esprit de ses instructions. Je viens de lui prescrire de nouveau de ne point aller au-delà. Veuillez communiquer cette réponse à Lord John Russell.

No. 474.

Sir H. Bulwer to Lord J. Russell.—(Received March 11.)

(No. 149.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, February 27, 1861.

IN obedience to the instructions contained in your Lordship's despatch No. 93 of the 14th instant, I have acquainted the Porte with Her Majesty's intention to station a squadron on the coast of Syria from the 1st of May of this year till the end of the summer.

I added, that it is proposed to renew the discretionary power given to the Admiral to land Marines in the case of urgent danger of massacre of British subjects, or of the Christian population.

Aali Pasha received this communication very favourably, and authorized me to assure Her Majesty's Government that the Sultan would view the intended measure as a fresh proof of the goodwill entertained by Great Britain towards this country.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY L. BULWER.

No. 475.

Lord A. Loftus to Lord J. Russell.—(Received March 11.)

(No. 47.)

My Lord,

Berlin, March 5, 1861.

I LOST no time in communicating to Baron Schleinitz the reply of Her Majesty's Government, as contained in your Lordship's telegram of the 2nd instant, to the proposal which his Excellency had requested me to submit to your Lordship's appreciation for an adjustment of the divergent opinions with respect to the prolonged occupation of Syria.

Baron Schleinitz observed that he could not quite understand what "security" for the evacuation of Syria your Lordship referred to, for he considered that the terms of the Convention itself, if entered into, would fulfil that requirement.

I replied to his Excellency that apparently, and as far as I was informed, the French Government were not disposed to accept any definite period for the occupation, or to comply with it, except under such conditions as would render the withdrawal of the French troops from Syria dependent upon certain future eventualities.

I stated to his Excellency that under these circumstances, objecting as they did to the principle of a prolonged occupation, and considering that it was rather calculated to retard than to accelerate the restoration of peace and harmony between the two hostile sects, and from a further conviction that the prolonged occupation of a portion of the Ottoman territory by a foreign force would seriously weaken the authority of the Sultan, Her Majesty's Government would prefer the immediate evacuation of Syria by the French troops, according to the terms of the Convention of the 5th of September, to a prolonged indefinite occupation.

In order to place his Excellency in possession of the views of Her Majesty's Government, I read to Baron Schleinitz your Lordship's despatch to Earl Cowley No. 238 of the 29th of February, a copy of which was inclosed to me in your Lordship's No. 22 of the 5th.

Baron Schleinitz thanked me for this communication, and replied that he had been very desirous that an arrangement should be come to between the Great Powers on this question; but that as matters now stood he should not move further, but maintain a passive position.

He was very happy to concur with Her Majesty's Government in the opinion that the period for the occupation, if prolonged, must be strictly defined, which his Excellency considered to be a cardinal point.

In answer to my inquiry, his Excellency said that he had made no reply to the communication lately made to him by the French Minister at this Court (referred to in my despatch No. 42 of the 2nd instant), nor was there any necessity for a reply, as it was merely a notification on the part of the French

Government of what had taken place at the late Conference, and of their fulfilment of a mandate which they had received from Europe.

I have, &c.

(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

No. 476.

Lord A. Loftus to Lord J. Russell.—(Received March 7.)

(No. 48. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Berlin, March 5, 1861.

IN conversing with Baron Schleinitz this morning on the subject of Syrian affairs (as reported in my previous numbered despatch), his Excellency expressed his fear that if the French Government were constrained to withdraw their troops from Syria at the period first agreed upon, the Oriental question would be within a month formally brought before Europe. He was afraid that disorder would again occur in Syria, which would lead to a question of European interference, and that thus would be reopened the Oriental question, the discussions on which might give rise to serious complications in Europe.

Baron Schleinitz observed, that for this reason he was anxious that an understanding should be come to between the Great Powers with regard to the occupation of Syria. Austria, he observed, was not in a state to face at present all the difficulties and dangers appertaining to the solution of an Oriental question. As regards ourselves, said Baron Schleinitz, "Prussia is quite ready for any questions of this nature, but Austria is so weakened by internal difficulties, that at this moment, any serious events in the East would greatly compromise the peace of her own Provinces."

Baron Schleinitz remarked, that he did not believe that the Russian Government were at all desirous of re-opening the Oriental question. Russia was not yet ripe to enter the lists on this question, nor prepared to encounter all its danger and embarrassments. But in his Excellency's opinion, a compulsory withdrawal of the French troops from Syria will assuredly give rise to events which will force the Oriental question on the attention of Europe, the consequences of which may be productive of serious danger to the general peace.

Baron Schleinitz expressly stated the foregoing to be his own personal opinions.

I consider it my duty to report these to your Lordship, but I request that this despatch may be regarded as confidential.

I have, &c.

(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

No. 477.

Lord A. Loftus to Lord J. Russell.—(Received March 11.)

(No. 58.)

My Lord,

Berlin, March 9, 1861.

I HAVE read to Baron Schleinitz your Lordship's despatch No. 26 of the 5th instant, stating that Her Majesty's Government regretted not being able to agree with the Prussian proposal for determining the duration of the French occupation of Syria, which, at Baron Schleinitz' request, I had transmitted to your Lordship in my telegram of the 2nd instant.

Previous to communicating your Lordship's reply, I thought it desirable to read to Baron Schleinitz my despatch to your Lordship No. 42 of the 2nd instant, to the exactness of which his Excellency bore testimony, stating that I had most correctly reported to your Lordship his opinions and the substance of our conversation.

In reply to my inquiry, Baron Schleinitz stated that he had not instructed Count Pourtalès to make any proposal to the Conference on the affairs of Syria, should it now assemble. His Excellency was of opinion that it would be better that the Conference should not meet until an arrangement had been previously come to between the Great Powers on the subject of the French occupation; as matters now stood, Prussia would maintain her passive position until his Excellency was informed of the reply of Her Majesty's Government to the last proposal which I had the honour to address to your Lordship by telegram on the 6th instant.

I have, &c.

(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

No. 478.

Lord A. Loftus to Lord J. Russell.—(Received March 11.)

(No. 66.)

My Lord,

Berlin, March 9, 1861.

BARON SCHLEINITZ informed me at the Palace on Wednesday last, before the ceremony of the installation, that he had received information on the Syrian question from Paris of a very conciliatory and satisfactory nature, which led him to believe that the French Government would agree to such an arrangement as would be satisfactory to all parties.

His Excellency stated, that in conversation with Count Pourtalès, M. de Thouvenel had expressed himself as willing to agree to a prolonged French occupation of Syria for three months, that is, until the 1st of June next.

Count Pourtalès hereupon had suggested the insertion of a clause in the new Convention, providing that at the expiration of the period fixed, the evacuation should take place, to which proposal M. de Thouvenel stated it as his opinion that there would be no objection.

Count Pourtalès further suggested that some formula might be agreed upon, to be inserted in the Convention, stating that the preparation for the evacuation should commence in May, so as to be completed by the 1st of June, and to admit of the evacuation being strictly carried out in accordance with the Convention.

To this latter suggestion Baron Schleinitz informs me that M. de Thouvenel did not raise any objection, although I have since heard from his Excellency that no formal assent to it was expressed by the French Minister.

Baron Schleinitz requested me to lose no time in submitting this proposal to Her Majesty's Government, stating that he was ready to bring it forward in the Conference if it should meet with their assent and concurrence.

I accordingly transmitted the substance of Baron Schleinitz's proposal to your Lordship in my telegram of the 6th instant.

I have, &c.

(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

No. 479.

Lord Bloomfield to Lord J. Russell.—(Received March 11.)

(No. 76.)

My Lord,

Vienna, March 7, 1861.

YOUR Lordship will have learnt by my telegram of the 5th March, recorded in my despatch No. 70 of the same date, that I had informed Count Rechberg that, in consequence of the vagueness of M. Thouvenel's language, Her Majesty's Government would not agree to a renewal of the Convention for Syria.

His Excellency did not enter into any discussion of the question of the prolonged occupation of this portion of the Turkish territory; but gave me simply to understand that the opinions of the Austrian Government were unchanged, and that the interests of the territorial Power would be the best guide of their policy.

I have, &c.

(Signed) BLOOMFIELD.

No. 480.

Lord Bloomfield to Lord J. Russell.—(Received March 11.)

(No. 78.)

My Lord,

Vienna, March 7, 1861.

I HAVE thought it advisable to read to Count Rechberg your Lordship's despatch No. 29 of the 23rd ultimo, as a proof of the complete accord which exists between Her Majesty's Government and that of the Emperor of Austria on the subject of a prolonged occupation of Syria.

His Excellency agreed entirely with the opinion expressed in your Lordship's

despatch, and hoped that the two Governments would continue to act together in whatever further decisions it may become necessary to take connected with this question.

I have, &c.
(Signed) BLOOMFIELD.

No. 481.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received March 11.)

(No. 351.)

My Lord

Paris, March 10, 1861.

WITH reference to your Lordship's despatch No. 287 of yesterday's date, I beg permission to observe that it may be perfectly true, as stated by M. de Flahault to your Lordship, that if M. Thouvenel consents to a fixed date for the evacuation of Syria, the reasons on which the French Minister founds his consent do not concern Her Majesty's Government.

But the fact is, that M. Thouvenel will not consent to a fixed date without mental reservations, which appear upon the surface as soon as a clear and positive designation of the day upon which the French troops shall have evacuated Syria is insisted upon. It is not Her Majesty's Government, then, who ask M. Thouvenel's reasons for consenting to a fixed date, but it is M. Thouvenel who, when asked to consent to a fixed date, forces his reasons upon Her Majesty's Government for declining the proposal.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

No. 482.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received March 11.)

(No. 352.)

My Lord,

Paris, March 10, 1861.

UPON the receipt of your Lordship's telegram of the day before yesterday, desiring me to act upon the instructions contained in your despatch No. 274 of the 7th instant, relative to the evacuation of Syria, I wrote to M. Thouvenel, and requested him to fix an hour for seeing me. Yesterday being Council day, he was unable to receive me until late in the afternoon, when I stated to him the decision at which Her Majesty's Government had arrived in consequence of the last communication of M. de Flahault, and the nature of the engagement which Her Majesty's Government expected the French Government to take if Her Majesty's Government were to consent to the prolongation of the occupation of Syria to the 5th of June.

M. Thouvenel said that the proposal of Her Majesty's Government showed such a complete mistrust of France that he must decline to agree to it. He would prefer the immediate withdrawal of the troops from Syria.

A lengthened conversation ensued between us. M. Thouvenel argued that to accept the proposal of Her Majesty's Government would be tantamount to declaring that under no possible contingencies could the occupation of Syria be prolonged, but that the troops must be brought away even if murder and destruction were raging around them; an engagement, he said, into which no French Minister could enter. He had no objection to assign in a Convention a final term to the occupation, but he would not debar himself the right of proposing a Conference at a later period, with a view of prolonging the occupation should events arise which in his opinion might render it necessary; but he conceived that by adopting your Lordship's proposal he should preclude himself from taking such a course. He went again over the old argument that the finality of the occupation was in the hands of the Porte and of Her Majesty's Government from the moment that a Convention should be signed fixing a day on which the occupation must cease.

I observed to M. Thouvenel in reply that I did not dispute the fact that France could be held to, or would deny the validity of, her engagements; but what Her Majesty's Government desired to be assured of was, that three months

hence they would not be subjected to the same disagreeable discussion as was pursuing now, in order to obtain the fulfilment of the new Convention, if one was to be signed. With regard to the convocation of a Conference hereafter, I could see nothing, I said, in the words of your Lordship's proposal which would preclude his Excellency, as he supposed, from taking such a step, it being of course understood that the Powers were free to accept or reject the proposal, were it to be made to them.

M. Thouvenel then read me the project of a Convention which he had communicated to Vefyk Efendi, and which he considered might be agreed to by all parties, whatever might be their separate motives of action. As his Excellency permitted me to take a copy of it, your Lordship will find it inclosed.

I remarked at once that the expression "*époque à laquelle l'évacuation doit s'effectuer*" was so vague that I was certain Her Majesty's Government would not accept it. It implied, moreover, that the evacuation was not to commence until after the 5th of June, whereas the proposal of Her Majesty's Government provided for its accomplishment at or before that date. M. Thouvenel argued that if the occupation was to be prolonged for three months, the evacuation ought only to commence after the expiration of those three months. I asked him, premising, however, that he must not consider my question as implying any, the slightest, acquiescence in his notions, how soon after the 5th of June he considered that the evacuation could be completed. He replied that if the transports were all ready (and their being upon the spot towards the end of May he said would be an earnest of the intentions of the French Government) he had learnt from the Minister of War and Marine that ten days would suffice to embark the troops, and he asked me whether Her Majesty's Government would be satisfied if that were to be stated in the Convention. Still maintaining the same reserves, I said that I should certainly prefer that he should make his project of Convention as stringent as possible, in other words that it should contain the deliberate intentions of the Imperial Government. M. Thouvenel then made the alteration which your Lordship will find in the inclosed document in red ink.* I have no doubt that I could have obtained a stronger wording of the phrase in question, but in presence of your Lordship's positive instructions and unwilling to give M. Thouvenel the slightest hope that your Lordship would depart from them, I considered it better to leave the matter entirely in the hands of Her Majesty's Government.

I am not sure, indeed, whether your Lordship will approve my having consented to be the medium of M. Thouvenel's communication, so positive are your last instructions to me as to the decision taken by Her Majesty's Government. I have, however, acted to the best of my judgment, and I must rely on your Lordship's indulgence should you consider me to have exceeded the bounds of discretion.

With regard to the question at issue, I believe that M. Thouvenel is himself convinced that the troops will have quitted Syria by the time he mentions, still there must be some reason beyond that which he alleges for refusing to bind himself positively upon the subject. Indeed, both my colleagues and myself have remarked that his language has been so vacillating from day to day that he hardly appears to be a free agent in the matter.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

Inclosure in No. 482.

Project of Convention communicated to Vefyk Efendi by M. Thouvenel.

LEURS Majestés

[après les explications échangées entre leurs Gouvernements respectifs] s'étant entendus pour modifier d'un commun accord l'Article V de la Convention signée entre elles le 5 Septembre dernier, ont nommé à cet effet pour leurs Plénipotentiaires, savoir:—

* The passages are printed in italics, in brackets.

Lesquels sont convenus de l'Article suivant :
Le terme de l'occupation Européenne en Syrie, qui avait été fixé à six mois dans l'Article V de la Convention du 5 Septembre dernier, est prolongé de trois mois jusqu'au 5 Juin de la présente année; époque à laquelle l'évacuation doit s'effectuer [et l'évacuation devra être effectuée le 15 du même mois].

No. 483.

Lord J. Russell to Earl Cowley.

(No. 291.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, March 11, 1861.

HER Majesty's Government have learnt with painful surprise, from your Excellency's despatch No. 352 of yesterday, that a still further postponement of the European evacuation of Syria is now proposed by M. Thouvenel.

Your Excellency has reported, and Her Majesty's Government have received from Constantinople, the expression of the Porte's desire that the evacuation should take place at the end of the six months stipulated by the Convention. The Sultan has declared himself ready to answer for the tranquillity of Syria.

Her Majesty's Government, on their part, consider that the cause of humanity suffers by the desultory murders of men, women, and children of the Druse tribes by the Maronites, under cover of the French occupation. They fear that these murders may lead either to a fearful retaliation, or to the extermination of the Druses.

Nevertheless, at the instance of the French Government, Her Majesty has consented to a prolongation of the European occupation, first from the 5th of March to the middle of April; then to the 1st of May; and latterly, in consequence of the importunities of the French Ambassador at Constantinople, the Sublime Porte has agreed to a further stay of the French troops, provided that Syria is entirely evacuated by them on the 5th of June.

But there must be some end of these concessions. Her Majesty's Government will by no means consent to an European occupation later than the 5th of June. Any occupation of Syria by French troops beyond that day will be considered by Her Majesty's Government as a breach of faith, against which it will be your duty formally to protest. You will, therefore, endeavour, in Conference, to obtain a new Convention, according to which the evacuation shall have been completed on or before the 5th of June.

I observe there appears to be some disposition on the part of M. Thouvenel to make a difference between the duration of the Convention and the actual evacuation. He appears to think that as the Convention bears date on the 5th of September, the prolongation should bear date the 5th of June, and the evacuation ought only to commence when the new Convention shall expire.

Her Majesty's Government did not act towards France in this cavilling spirit. Let us look to the facts.

M. de Persigny informed me on the 19th of July, of the proposal of France to send European troops to Syria. I communicated to M. de Persigny on the same day, after consulting the Cabinet, the acquiescence of Her Majesty's Government in the substance of the proposal. The Protocol was signed on the 3rd of August; it was agreed that orders for the departure of the troops should be sent, and M. Thouvenel wrote to the Minister of War on the 4th of August. By the 28th of August, the main body of the French troops had landed in Syria. The "Ganges," with 500 men, which had been detained by the weather, arrived at Beyrout on the 2nd of September, three days before the signature, and forty-six days before the ratification, of the Convention. Such was the confidence shown by Great Britain in the good faith of France.

Her Majesty's Government entirely approve of your Excellency's language to M. Thouvenel, as reported in your despatch No. 352.

Your Excellency will take care that in any words which may be substituted, the object which Her Majesty's Government have in view, namely, the complete evacuation of Syria on the 5th of June next, shall be secured.

In regard to the Convention, Her Majesty's Government would agree to M. Thouvenel's words, excepting "époque à laquelle l'évacuation doit s'effectuer," which, as your Excellency observes, are vague and indefinite.

If these attempts at conciliation should fail, your Excellency will call upon the French Government to fulfil without delay the conditions of the Convention of the 5th of September last.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 484.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received March 11.)

(No. 353. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Paris, March 10, 1861.

I WAS somewhat astonished to see in your Lordship's despatch No. 274 of the 7th instant, that M. de Schleinitz had informed Her Majesty's Government that M. Thouvenel had stated to the Prussian Minister at Paris that there would be no objection to insert in the fresh Convention for the prolonged occupation of Syria, a formula, providing that the preparations for evacuation shall commence in May so as to be completed by the 5th of June; for my relations with Count Pourtales have been uninterrupted, and he had never alluded with me to anything of the kind.

On my mentioning the matter to him yesterday, he said that M. de Schleinitz had been too positive in his assertion, for that he (Count Pourtales) had never stated more than that he thought it might be possible to obtain some such declaration from M. Thouvenel. He added that there had been a moment when he had hoped that M. Thouvenel would have consented to this solution of the Syrian question, but it appeared as if he had been prevented by considerations foreign to himself.

As to M. Thouvenel, he utterly denies ever having entertained an idea of the kind.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

No. 485.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received March 12.)

(No. 361. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Paris, March 11, 1861.

YOUR Lordship in your despatches to Sir Henry Bulwer and to myself animadverted with great justice on the course which Vefyk Efendi is pursuing here. But in justice to him, it must be said that it is in a great measure the Porte's own fault. When the Conferences on the Syrian question were opened last year, no Agent could have defended with greater dignity or more talent the interests confided to him. For this he fell into disgrace with the French Government, who asked for his recall. The Porte, instead of standing by a faithful servant, gave way to the exigencies of the French Government. Hardly had it done so, when the question of re-assembling the Conference arises, and Vefyk Efendi is desired to remain to take part in them. The natural consequence of this is, that Vefyk Efendi, having seen himself abandoned by his Government last year, now tries to conciliate the French, at the same time that, by obtaining money for the Porte, he hopes on his return to Constantinople to stand well in the favour of the Sultan.

The Porte can never be well served when her servants are treated as has been Vefyk Efendi.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

No. 486.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received March 12.)

(No. 363.)

My Lord,

Paris, March 11, 1861.

YOUR Lordship's telegram of 6:30 P.M. yesterday reached me early this morning, and I saw M. Thouvenel this afternoon.

On my informing his Excellency that Her Majesty's Government would make no further concessions with regard to the prolonged occupation of Syria, he inquired whether he was to understand that Her Majesty's Government maintained the intention of demanding that the troops should actually be on their way home on the 5th of June.

I replied in the affirmative; when he said that nothing would induce him to sign such a stipulation, and that he must express his surprise that Her Majesty's Government should make a proposal so derogatory to the honour of France. He was ready, as Her Majesty's Government insisted upon it, to agree that the evacuation shall be terminated on the 5th of June; but Her Majesty's Government had no right, in his opinion, to stipulate more than this, nor to dictate what is to become of the troops when re-embarked. Her Majesty's Government had ordered a squadron, with marine troops, to the coast of Syria. Was France to be debarred from keeping troops on board her ships if she pleased? If Her Majesty's Government were willing to sign a Convention in the usual form, he was ready to do so; but no French Minister could put his name to such a Convention as I had described that suggested by Her Majesty's Government to be.

After stating this with warmth, M. Thouvenel grew more calm, and showed a desire to bring this question to a conclusion. He said that he would send a Draft of Convention to-night to M. de Flahault for your Lordship's consideration, and you might introduce modifications into it if you pleased.

I have also endeavoured, on my part, to bring the Draft which your Lordship sent me as near as possible to what I imagine M. Thouvenel will consent.

This project is inclosed herewith. It has not been seen by M. Thouvenel, because I would not take any step with him which would involve the least departure from my instructions.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

Inclosure in No. 486.

Draft of Convention prepared by Earl Cowley.

ARTICLE I.

LA durée de l'occupation Européenne en Syrie sera prolongée jusqu'au 5 Juin de la présente année, époque à laquelle il est entendu entre les Hautes Parties Contractantes qu'elle aura atteint son terme définitif et que l'évacuation aura été effectuée.

ARTICLE II.

Les stipulations contenues dans la deuxième Article de la Convention du 5 Septembre, 1860, en tant qu'elles n'ont point encore été exécutées ou qu'elles ne sont pas modifiées par la présente Convention, demeureront en force pendant la période qui s'écoulera entre la date de la signature de la dite Convention et le 5 Juin de la présente année.

ARTICLE III.

La présente, &c., &c.

No. 487.

Lord Dufferin to Lord J. Russell.—(Received March 13.)

(No. 70.)

My Lord,

Beyrout, February 15, 1861.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Lordship's information, copies of further despatches which I have this day addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at the Porte.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 487.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, February 12, 1861.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that Fuad Pasha has just communicated to me a copy of the Porte's project for the future government of Syria, and I certainly agree with your Excellency in thinking the plan liable to grave objections. In fact, I have little hesitation in saying that the half-measures it proposes will prove very insufficient to guarantee the future tranquillity of the country, while they will certainly fail to restore the confidence of the Christian population.

After a long and arduous study of the necessities of the province, arising out of its geographical position, the multiplicity of the fanatical sects which compose its population, and the peculiarities which distinguish the Arab races from the other inhabitants of the Ottoman Empire, a firm conviction has impressed itself on the minds of the European Commissioners that the only prospect of creating a strong government for Syria consists in the centralization of the local Pashalics, in the de-centralization of the province, and in the individual responsibility of a single Governor.

The proposal of the Porte is in direct opposition to these three principles. Beyrout and Damascus are retained as separate head-quarters, and each is made equally dependent on Constantinople, while the Military Commander of the forces remains independent of either.

Now, it is to this very system that the late catastrophe in the Mountain may be in some degree attributed. If there be any excuse for Koorshid Pasha's conduct, it is to be found in the fact that Ahmed Pasha, Governor of Damascus and Mushir of Arabistan, was his enemy. Tahir Pasha, the Military Commander at Beyrout, and all the officers in garrison at Deir-el-Kamar and Bteddin, were under the Mushir's orders.

The bad understanding which is known to have existed between Koorshid Pasha and Tahir Pasha was the natural consequence of this circumstance, and may have impeded, as is warmly asserted by one of my colleagues, the action of the Pasha of Beyrout, and thus contributed to the massacres.

At all events, it is very certain that the present scheme is simply a continuation of the old state of things, with the addition of a system of representative Medjlis, and the occasional visit of an Inspector-General.

It remains to be considered whether these new institutions afford counter-vailing securities. I confess, that as far as my limited experience enables me to judge, it seems to me they do not.

In these countries, the efficiency of a Medjlis depends to a great extent on the character of the person who presides over it. If its proceedings are conducted under the auspices of an ill-disposed official, the members are more likely to become his accomplices than sureties for his good conduct, while the partnership thus established serves only to relieve him from all responsibility.

To the second expedient of an annual visit by a high dignitary of the Porte, I am disposed to attach still less importance. Such personages have already appeared from time to time on the stage of Syrian affairs, and our Blue Books are filled with no very encouraging records of their interference.

In some of my earlier despatches, I ventured to mention to your Excellency that it was difficult to foresee how the future security of the Christians in Syria was ever to be maintained unless guaranteed by the presence of a small European force. Subsequent reflection led me to suggest the substitution of a Governor-Generalship for so inconvenient, if not impossible, an expedient. This proposition being rejected by the Porte all my previous misgivings return, and I naturally feel anxious to guard myself against being held answerable for what may hereafter occur in this country.

In recommending Her Majesty's Government to insist on the withdrawal of the French division, I confidently looked forward to the promulgation of the new Constitution of the province as a means of checking the panic which will probably invade not only the native Christians but also the European residents of Beyrout on the announcement of General Beaufort's departure. Had it been possible to have provided against this contingency by the inauguration of a new era, and a complete change in the mode of administering the province, the alarm which I

fear may now manifest itself would have been completely dissipated. As it is, I am afraid that the evacuation of Damascus by the Christians will continue, and that nothing will induce those who have left it to return. A similar movement will probably take place at Beyrout, and a general exodus from the country of those rich enough to go may be expected. This result will be considered by the Moslems of the province as a triumph, and may perhaps be viewed with indifference by the Turks; but by those who had aspired to a more satisfactory conclusion to their labours it will be felt as a disappointment.

I have, &c.

(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 2 in No. 487.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, February 15, 1861.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Excellency's information, copy of another clause (No. 11) which has been added by the Commission to those I have already communicated to your Excellency as a commencement of the basis for our Report on the reorganization of the Lebanon.

As your Excellency will observe, the most impartial attention has been paid to the claims of all the various sects and communities inhabiting the Mountain. Although the non-Christian element forms but one-fifth of the entire population, in both Medjlises Christians and non-Christians are represented in exactly the same proportion; while the Druses, whose number, probably, does not exceed 35,000 souls, send an equal number of delegates with the Maronites, who are estimated at 150,000 souls.

It has also been agreed that inasmuch as the Protestant and Jewish Communities have been recognized by the Porte as independent Rites or Millets, a delegate from each shall have the right of sitting, both in the Judicial and in the Administrative Medjlis, whenever the interests of their respective Societies are concerned. As, however, the number of Protestants at this moment in the Lebanon does not exceed 500 or 600 persons, women and children included, and as the Jews are still less numerous, I did not think advisable to insist that they should act as more than occasional members at these Councils.

I have, &c.

(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 3 in No. 487.

Article II of the Basis for the Future Government of Syria.

Les deux Medjlis supérieurs seront composés de douze membres, savoir : 2 Maronites, 2 Grecs Orthodoxes, 2 Grecs Catholiques, 2 Druzes, 2 Musulmans, 2 Metâuali; auxquels on adjoindra éventuellement un Représentant des Cultes Protestant et Israélite, quand un membre de ces Communautés aura des intérêts engagés dans l'affaire portée devant l'un ou l'autre de ces deux Medjlis.

(Suivent les paraphes.)

Inclosure 4 in No. 487.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, February 15, 1861.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that a report has just reached me that Yusef Keram, the Christian Kaimakam, has thrown into prison certain Christian notables for having addressed him as "the eminent and revered Bek," instead of as "the Majestic Bek."

I have reason to believe that there is some truth in the story, which I repeat for your Excellency's amusement, the incident having arisen probably out

of an affront put upon the Kaimakam by some of his aristocratic rivals. The whole proceeding is a significant indication of the state of feeling in the country.

I take this opportunity of transmitting a proclamation lately issued by the same functionary of an equally entertaining character.

I have, &c.

(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 5 in No. 487.

Proclamation.

(Condensed translation.)

WHEREAS, the former Governors of Mount Lebanon gave special titles to certain families and individuals on account of the excellence of their services, by which they obtained also the favour of the Government. But recently these people have forgotten the good works of their forefathers, and have presumed to take upon themselves advancement and titles, since the establishment of the separate Christian Kaimakamate.

The former Kaimakams, owing to their weakness, were obliged to grant greater titles and distinctions to those who were known as intriguers, in order to gain their adhesion, which proceeding injured their security, for some people purposely resorted to agitation in order to obtain titles, so that unmerited titles were conferred on many, which has reduced Mount Lebanon to its present degraded condition.

Those who persevere in these practices in order to get advanced titles, instead of thinking of what would please the Government and her officers, and would advance the prosperity of the inhabitants, when they saw that the compassion of our Governor had overshadowed my services by investing me with the office of Christian Kaimakam of Mount Lebanon, showed pretensions which were displeasing, from their belief that I am not of the family of the old Kaimakams of Mount Lebanon, and was but a short time ago like unto them in position; and some of them have persuaded themselves that I ought to raise their rank above what they were before, that otherwise they will refuse obedience and cause agitation and intrigue on the plea that I am only temporary Kaimakam; so that by means of their improper proceedings either I shall be obliged to consent to their demands for advancement and outrage upon the poor, or the Government must dismiss me and give them liberty to attack and destroy, which would cause many misfortunes unnecessary to mention. It has neither occurred to them that the giving of titles is the prerogative of Government, nor that I when in a similar position to themselves and saw the ruin of the Government and the consequent ruin of the country, arrested some of the overseers and Mokatajis, and placed them in confinement, thus preventing them from committing depredations till the Government should be re-established, and should be in a position to consider about their punishment.

Naturally what I did at that time was with the hope that lawful justice would raise me in the eyes of the Government, and would divest me of blame; and I do this more energetically now, because I am duly appointed by Government; the temporariness of my appointment does not render me the less able to act; on the contrary it makes me more anxious to punish the refractory and those who will not know that the temporariness of my office is an act of wisdom on the part of the Government, that I may always hear the voice of dismissal in my ears, and that when I quit the service I may leave behind me a path of security to the inhabitants whom I love much more than my own advancement, and place before them new customs which they may practise everywhere, that they may rise in rank, and gain good name by merit, removing self-love and avarice, and in their stead exert themselves for the establishment of security. Such a person I should consider worthy of dignity, and I would take him as an assistant.

Some of the employés in this Kaimakamate have old superstitions; they have been arrested, and will remain until the beginning of Lent, when their conduct will be examined, and their punishment awarded.

Furthermore, I have written to all the Mokatajis, calling them "dear brothers," in the same style that their own former direct superiors wrote to them; and I will act towards them according to their doings. I shall also write to

some others with the title of "dear brother," as they may deserve; and have decided henceforth not to write letters such as those past, which are humiliating to a Government officer, and which have caused some to raise themselves to a step far above their position, which they ought to have reflected on the donor, as I myself render it to my immediate superior; for which reasons I have published this proclamation. Every one will act as he may think proper, and will be dealt with accordingly, and as may be considered necessary on my part.
Be it known!

No. 488.

Lord Dufferin to Lord J. Russell.—(Received March 13.)

(No. 71.)

My Lord,

Beyrout, February 24, 1861.

I AM happy to inform your Lordship that the prospects of the peasantry, and their opportunities of providing for their own support, have already sufficiently improved to render it a subject of debate at the meetings of the Anglo-American Relief Committee, whether it may not be advisable to write to England to stop any further supplies of money being sent to Syria.

I have, &c.

(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

No. 489.

Lord Dufferin to Lord J. Russell.—(Received March 13.)

(No. 72.)

My Lord,

Beyrout, February 24, 1861.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge receipt of your Lordship's despatch No. 66 of the 1st instant, instructing me that it is the wish of Her Majesty's Government that the Commission should confine their attention to the Lebanon alone; and I beg to inform your Lordship that, in compliance with your Lordship's instructions, I have already been occupying myself during the last week, and ever since the receipt of that despatch, in discussing severally with my colleagues the various combinations most suitable to the Mountain considered in its former relation to the province.

By the next post I shall be able to pronounce more definitively upon the subject, but, as far as I am able to judge at present, there are only two solutions left for us, namely, either to place the Mixed districts under the immediate control of the Turks, or to separate the populations, which might be done now without any very extreme difficulty, and create three Kaimakamships, composed respectively of none but pure Maronite, Greek, and Druse elements.

This plan would be very heartily supported by Russia, and I believe neither M. Béchard nor Fuad Pasha would object to it, but the latter would wish the Druse Kaimakam to be placed under a Turkish Governor.

It may, however, be premature to speak upon this subject, as the constant occupation we have had in settling the affair connected with the judicial proceedings at Beyrout have prevented me paying as much attention to it as I hope to do during the ensuing week.

In explanation of my despatch No. 70 of the 15th instant, I would beg to state that it ought to have gone by the last boat, and that it was written before I received your Lordship's fresh instructions, and in ignorance of your present wishes.

Nevertheless, if it were not too presumptuous on my part, I would venture to adhere to the general opinion therein expressed.

I fear great efforts are being made by designing persons to discourage and unsettle the population of Damascus and the Mountain.

I have, &c.

(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

No. 490.

Lord Dufferin to Lord J. Russell.—(Received March 13.)

(No. 73.)

My Lord,

Beyrout, February 24, 1861.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that having ventured to mention to Colonel Chanzy, a French officer attached, in something approaching to a Diplomatic capacity, to the Staff of General de Beaufort, that I regretted extremely more active measures should not have been taken to put a stop to the murdering of Druses by the Christians during the last six months,—that officer replied, that if upwards of 200 Druse men and women had been murdered by the Christians, at all events an equal number of Christians had been murdered during the same period by the Druses, and that he would send officers through the villages to collect the names of the victims in question.

As it may be as well at once to put this point beyond the possibility of doubt, I venture to transmit to your Lordship extracts from several private letters I have received from various persons resident in different parts of the Mountain, who are in a position to state authoritatively whether or no any such assassinations have occurred during the last six months in their respective neighbourhoods.

As the area with which we are concerned is very small, and as each of these gentlemen inhabits a separate centre, there is no part of the Mountain which will remain unanswered for; and the very fact of so many of my correspondents alluding to the same circumstance will be an indication sufficient to reassure your Lordship that the news of any such event as a murder is at once known all over the country.

It only remains for me to mention the names of my informants. The first is Mr. Scott, an English silk-spinner; the next is M. Morgue, a French gentleman engaged in the same pursuit; Mr. Benton, Mr. Calhoun, and Mr. Ford are American missionaries; and Mr. Abela is Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Sidon.

I have, &c.

(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 490.

*Major Fraser to Lord Dufferin.**Beyrout, February 19, 1861.*

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to state that when the list of Druses murdered by Christians since the military occupation of Mount Lebanon was handed to me at Mokhtarab, I requested the Christians at that place to furnish me with a similar list of Christians stated by them to have been murdered by Druses within the same period.

The highest rate at which I have ever heard these even loosely stated amounted to thirty; but to this moment no list of names has been sent to me, and an agent, whom I myself employed at that time, could not procure the names of more than three, and these without the corroborative particulars of date and place of alleged crimes.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. J. FRASER.

Inclosure 2 in No. 490.

Extracts from Letters received respecting reported Murders of Christians by Druses since the Military Occupation of the Mountain.

From Mr. J. Scott, dated Shumlain, February 14:—

"You may inform Lord Dufferin that I have no knowledge of any Christian being killed by Druses since the arrival of the French military expedition in Syria."

"There was a report of a quarrel at Arsoon about some grapes, in which it was said a Maronite lost his life; but I never heard that it was authenticated."

From M. Mourgue, dated Ain Hamadé, February 14:—

"En réponse à votre billet d'hier, il n'est pas à ma connaissance qu'aucun meurtre, ni tentative de meurtre, ait été commis dans mon district, le Metn, par les Druses sur la personne de quelques Chrétiens depuis l'arrivée de MM. les Commissaires des grandes Puissances."

"L'effet moral qu'avait déjà produit l'arrivée de nos troupes s'était alors fait sentir, et le Metn plus que tout autre ne demandait que la concorde."

From Rev. J. E. Ford, dated Sidon, February 14:—

"The only case of the kind that has come to my knowledge is that of two Christians who were murdered near the village of Ashieh in Jebel Rihan about the 1st of October. According to the accounts I then heard the murderers were Druses of the Reis family, who were said to have had an old blood feud with the family of the murdered persons. I have since been told that two Arabs have been arrested on suspicion of their being the murderers."

From the Rev. S. H. Calhoun, dated Abeih, February 15:—

"In reply to your inquiry about the murders of Christians since the coming of the French military expedition, I have to say, that after taxing my own memory, and that of another, himself a Christian, I have no recollection of anything of the kind having occurred in all Lebanon, except the murder of, I believe, two Christians in the region of Jezzin, or near the village of Niha. It was said that Druses were the murderers in this case; though I afterwards heard that the guilty persons were from further south, and were perhaps Metualis. I was never able to ascertain the fact as accurately as I could wish; but I believe there was no doubt about the fact of the murder. In all this quarter I have not the slightest recollection of anything of the kind having occurred. I hold myself subject to correction in this respect."

From the Rev. W. Benton, dated Bhamdun, February 16, 1861:—

"I am happy to state, for the information of Lord Dufferin, that we have heard of no instance of any such murder."

"I have inquired of the Christians at Bhamdun repeatedly, but they have no knowledge of any cases of this description."

Inclosure 3 in No. 490.

Vice-Consul Abela to Vice-Consul Rogers.

(Translation.)

Illustrious Sir,

Saida, February 14, 1861.

IN answer to your confidential letter of yesterday, written to me by the order of Lord Dufferin, I have the honour to inform you that, on Saturday, the 6th of October of last year, when his Excellency Fuad Pasha was at Mokhtara, a murder was committed in the fields belonging to the Druse village Kahlunieh, which is opposite to, and at a distance of half-an-hour from, Mokhtara. Some inquiries were made, but they resulted in nothing, it not being discovered who either the murderer or the murdered man was. The supposition was that he was a Christian because some Christian charms or relics were found on the corpse; the Druses, on the other hand, pretended he was a Druse, but this was not proved before the Commission at Mokhtara.

In my letter No. 158 of the 2nd of November of last year, to Mr. Consul-General Moore, I gave an account of the murder of Shahin and his brother Abdallah Nihawi in the village Ashiyeh, in the district of Aklun Rihan. At that time it was said that the said murder had been committed by the family of Beit Seif, of the village of Niha, in the district of Shuf; but subsequently I heard that the said crime has been attributed to two Bedouin, who, it is said, were captured and conducted to Mokhtara.

I have, &c.

(Signed) JACOB ABELA.

No. 491.

Lord Dufferin to Lord J. Russell.—(Received March 13.)

(No. 74.)

My Lord,

Beyrout, February 24, 1861.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Lordship's information, copies of further despatches which I have this day addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople.

I have, &c.

(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 491.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, February 24, 1861.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Excellency, in the form of a Minute, the substance of the observations I have felt it my duty to address to my colleagues, at one of our unofficial meetings, on the subject of the judgments proposed to be passed by the Extraordinary Tribunal of Beyrout on the Turkish and Druse prisoners accused of having countenanced or organized the late butcheries in the Mountain.

Having gone into every particular case separately, and having prefaced my opinion upon each by a general review of the whole question, I do not think I need trouble your Excellency with any explanatory remarks. I will content myself with stating that the conclusions embodied in the accompanying paper have been arrived at after the most anxious deliberation, and are certainly uninfluenced by any feelings of partiality towards any of the accused.

When I first came to this country I was under the impression of those natural sentiments of indignation which animated every one who had heard of the horrible atrocities perpetrated by the Druses on the Christians, and I fully expected that the investigation it was become my duty to pursue would only confirm my previous impressions.

To my surprise, however, I soon began to discover that the subject was more complicated than I had imagined; that there were two sides to the story; and that it was quite possible it might become necessary to modify my opinions. In proportion as the real truth unfolded itself this conjecture became a certainty, and I am now in a position to state, without fear of contradiction, that however criminal may have been the excesses into which the Druses were subsequently betrayed, the original provocation came from the Christians, and that they are themselves, in a great measure, responsible for the torrents of blood which have been shed.

This consideration has naturally influenced the conclusions at which I have arrived regarding the prisoners referred to in the Minute, and I have thought it my duty carefully to distinguish between those who may be regarded as mere butchers and those against whom no graver allegation can be brought than that they took part in the general hostilities which were being waged throughout the Mountain.

Unfortunately, the Turkish Tribunal has acted on a different principle, and with an indiscriminating severity, which in my opinion is quite unjustifiable. They have proposed to pronounce on the eleven Druse Sheiks, many of whom were certainly not concerned in the massacres, and all of whom voluntarily surrendered to take their trial, the same fatal verdict that they have reserved for the blood-stained murderers who have attempted to fly from justice. This decision, I regret to say, has been subscribed to without hesitation by the French and Prussian Commissioners.

Before, however, entering further into the subject, perhaps I had better recount to your Excellency the circumstances which took place at the meeting held for the purpose of discussing the Tribunal's judgments, and of drawing up the note in which our opinions upon them were to be communicated to Fuad Pasha.

Last Thursday was the day appointed; but as the business occupied the whole of yesterday's sitting as well, for the sake of brevity I will consider the two conferences as one.

I had originally proposed that, although conducted in the absence of Fuad Pasha, our proceedings should be considered official, and be recorded in a Protocol. This suggestion was first objected to, then adopted, and finally abandoned.

I will not trouble your Excellency with any minute detail of all that passed. It will be sufficient if I state the several opinions put forward by each member of the Commission.

M. Weckbecker, as our doyen, was the first to speak. He confirmed the judgment of the Court (perpetual imprisonment) in the case of Khoorshid and Tahir Pashas, and the other Turkish prisoners, and acquitted all the Druse Chiefs but three. Of these, two convicted for murder he condemned to be executed, and for the other he demanded a revision of the trial.

M. Béclard followed, and pronounced a universal sentence of death on Turks and Druses, to be commuted in the case of one old Sheik, past 70, into perpetual imprisonment. Before concluding, however, he intimated his desire that none of the capital sentences pronounced at Moktarah should be carried into execution.

When it came to my turn, I spoke in the sense described in the Minute, designating Khoorshid Pasha, Tahir Pasha, and Nouri Bek, as deserving the extremity of punishment, with a recommendation to mercy in favour of the last; confirming the judgment of the Court on Wasfi and Achmet Efendi; requiring revision of the judgments in the case of six of the Druses; a commutation of the capital sentence in favour of three; and subscribing to the execution of two whose personal participation in the massacres has been put beyond all doubt.

M. Novikow pronounced himself favourable to a sentence of death being recorded against the two Pashas and the Turkish Colonel; but he evinced a desire to draw a distinction between Khoorshid Pasha's political and personal responsibility, the latter of which he seemed to consider less fatally compromised than the former. The Turkish subordinate officials he desired to see imprisoned for life. As to the Druses, his view differed both from mine and from M. Béclard's. Said Bey he was ready to pronounce guilty, though he admitted that the evidence on the trial was not enough to convict him. Two of the sentences that I had wished to be revised he was ready to confirm, the others he proposed should be commuted; while upon two or three he declined to pronounce any opinion at all. He agreed, however, with the rest of the Commission in pronouncing a capital sentence against the two prisoners I have already designated as actual assassins.

M. de Rehfues concluded by pronouncing upon all alike the same sweeping sentence of death as that already recorded by M. Béclard.

This portion of the proceedings was terminated by all the Commissioners, with the exception of M. de Weckbecker, drawing up a note to Fuad Pasha, copy of which I have the honour to inclose, in which, in vague and general terms, they convey to his Excellency their dissatisfaction with the judgments proposed by his Extraordinary Tribunal.

Next Tuesday the Commission is to meet officially under the presidency of his Excellency for the purpose of receiving his reply to our communication, and of expressing our individual opinions in a more precise manner.

In the mean time I have communicated to his Excellency the substance of the telegram your Excellency has forwarded to me from Lord John Russell, announcing that the French and British Governments concur in the opinion that the execution of one or two of the Druse Chiefs as ringleaders will satisfy public justice.

His Excellency has answered me in return that, provided the Governments of Europe will relieve him from the responsibilities attaching to such an act of leniency in the estimation of public opinion among the Christians, here and in Europe, he will be too glad to follow a course so entirely in accordance with the personal sentiments of his Sovereign.

I have also made a similar communication to M. Béclard, but that gentleman only expressed great surprise at what I said, alleging that his advices from M. Thouvenel merely instructed him to convey a recommendation to mercy to

the Turkish Government on behalf of the persons lately convicted of murder at Mokhtarah.

In reference to this subject I may mention that when M. Béclard suggested yesterday to the Commission that an intimation to the above effect should be conveyed to Fuad Pasha, he encountered some little opposition from M. Novikow and M. de Rehfues; M. Novikow urging with great truth that it would be a great injustice to suffer actual murderers to escape, when you condemn to death, as at all events some of the Commissioners proposed to do, a number of Druse notables, against whom no particular act of atrocity could be alleged.

Before concluding, I may venture to spend a few moments in analyzing the results of this important meeting.

Your Excellency will have observed that two out of five of the Representatives seem to have acted in accordance with a general principle, and having taken for granted that the whole Druse nation is guilty, have pronounced sentences of death on all the Chiefs that have put themselves into the power of the Government. Such a conclusion is so completely at variance with my own convictions that I cannot but protest against it; and I think your Excellency will have gathered from my previous despatches a sufficient number of facts to induce you to dispute its correctness. My other two colleagues, I am happy to say, have taken a different view of the matter, and together with myself have agreed to judge each case on its own merits. Although no previous consultation had taken place between us until the last moment, I was happy to find that, with the exception of the degree of culpability attaching to the two Pashas, my Austrian colleague and myself had arrived at almost exactly the same conclusions; in several of these M. Novikow is also able to agree. Even where I am obliged to differ with this latter gentleman, whose conscientious impartiality is beyond all praise, it is more in consequence of the difference of the method of investigation we have each resorted to, than any disagreement in our appreciation of facts. We both agree in attributing the original fault to Christians. "Along the whole boundary of the Mixed districts," said M. Novikow to me yesterday, "the Christians were the first to commence the attack upon the Druses." We both agree in wishing only to condemn those implicated in the massacres; and in most of the individual verdicts we have pronounced we are also agreed.

The principal, nay I may almost say the only, points at which we are at variance are the opinions we hold respectively on the culpability of Khoorshid Pasha and of Said Bey Djumblat. His views in regard to the former I have already alluded to. With respect to the examination of the *procès-verbal* of the latter, he has adopted a principle which seems to me to be both dangerous and critical. In the first place he receives with implicit faith the statement of every Christian that is given on oath, without reference to its general character, and the other considerations which may compromise its credibility, saying that unless you consent to do this, it will be impossible to arrive at a conclusion at all; and, in the next, he has allowed information he has acquired elsewhere to supplement the materials of conviction which he admits to be wanting in the proceedings before the Court. The consequence has been that he attaches considerable weight to the testimony of a witness whose evidence I had discarded on account of the palpable exaggeration of many of his statements; and he has allowed himself to be influenced by many of the stories current in the mouths of the unfortunate victims of the late atrocities, and, probably, detailed by them in perfect good faith, but which, unless subjected to the test of repetition in open Court, if not of cross-examination, ought never to be made the thread on which a human life should hang. Were such a principle admitted, I do not know who in this country would be safe.

In the case of Said Bey, it would be simply fatal. There is scarcely one class in the community to which he is not obnoxious. The Turks and Christians, and even a party among the Druses themselves, equally desire his ruin. It is on this account that I have taken especial care to examine, point by point, the evidence against him. By the next post I hope to send to your Excellency a copy of the *procès-verbal* of the trial, and I trust you will find that the remarks I have made in the Minute I now forward will have been justified by its contents. If they should appear to be conceived rather too much in the spirit of an advocate than a judge, I trust you will remember that I was discussing a question of life and death, in behalf of a man whose fate I knew was sealed by the foregone conclusions and, I may almost venture to say, by the prejudices of a majority

of my colleagues. The observations, moreover, it embodies, were made at one of our unofficial meetings, the document has not been communicated to any one, and, above all things, it does not contain a line or a word which was not dictated by a conscientious desire to state the exact conclusions to be drawn by an impartial analysis of the proceedings before the Court.

I have, &c.

(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 2 in No. 491.

Minute on the Judgments proposed to be passed on the Turkish Officials and Druse Chiefs by the Extraordinary Tribunal of Beyrout.

THE British Commissioner has the honour, in the following Minute, of communicating to his colleagues the impressions conveyed to his mind by a careful study of the *procès-verbaux* of the trials of the Turkish officials and Druse Chiefs now awaiting judgment in the prison of Beyrout; but before reviewing each case, he would wish to establish in a precise manner the principles which, in his opinion, ought to regulate any revisal of the proceedings of the Extraordinary Tribunal.

According to the understanding arrived at between the Ottoman Commissioners and the Representatives of the Five Powers, it was determined that the Commission should have the privilege of assisting, either in person or by deputy, at the proceedings of the Court; and that before any sentence was recorded by his Excellency Fuad Pasha against any of the prisoners, the Commissioners should have the right to submit to his Excellency any observations the occasion might require. By this arrangement, the European Representatives became in some sort Assessors with his Excellency on the cases brought before him, and responsible for whatever verdict might be rendered upon each.

The exercise of these functions necessarily involves an inquiry, not only into the absolute guilt or innocence of the accused, but an accurate appreciation of the degree of culpability attaching to every individual. The importance of this consideration is enhanced by the fact that there are more than two parties to the cause on which our attention is engaged. The accusations of the Christian prosecutors are directed, not only against their Druse enemies, but also against the Ottoman authorities; while the Druses, in their turn, accuse the Christians, and the Ottoman authorities accuse both Druses and Christians. It becomes, therefore, the duty of those who are watching the proceedings on behalf of Europe, carefully to disentangle the truth from the network of recrimination in which it is involved, in order to assign their due share of responsibility to each of the parties concerned. Such a precaution is rendered all the more necessary by the suspicious proposal of the Turkish tribunal to condemn, at a single swoop, the eleven Druse Chiefs to death, while the lighter penalty of imprisonment is adjudged to each of their own co-religionists. Before, therefore, proceeding any further, the British Commissioner would wish to record his opinion—

First. That the very fact of such horrible scenes having taken place within the jurisdiction, and almost in the presence, of the Ottoman military and civil officials, constitutes of itself a *prima facie* case against them of a nature to evoke the utmost rigour of the law, unless there shall appear on the face of the proceedings, evidence of a character to mitigate the gravity of their crimes.

And, secondly, that with regard to the Druses, a distinction must be maintained between those who merely flew to arms in their own defence, and engaged in the ordinary hostilities of mountain warfare, and those who are proved to have either planned or executed the savage massacres in which they terminated. The maintenance of this distinction becomes most imperative when we remember it is an admitted fact that the original provocation proceeded from the Christians, who had been for months beforehand preparing an onslaught on the Druses, which their leaders confidently expected would terminate, if not in the extermination, at all events in the expulsion, of that race. Arms were imported in extraordinary quantities; martial assemblies were convoked in various parts of the Mountain; inflammatory missives, purporting to proceed from the spiritual Chiefs of the Maronite party, were extensively circulated; a Central Committee of very questionable character was established at Beyrout; and there is reason to

believe that Christians of other denominations were required, under pain of vengeance in case of their refusal, to take part in the Holy War.

It would further appear that, not content with the confidence inspired by the enormous superiority that a nation of 150,000 souls possesses over a tribe scarcely numbering 30,000 persons, the Christian clergy endeavoured still further to animate the courage of their flocks, by telling them that their endeavour to attain undisputed possession of the Lebanon would be warmly countenanced by the Powers of Christendom. It is not to be imagined that these designs, so openly prosecuted as to have become notorious months before the final outbreak occurred, should have remained unknown to those against whom they were directed. The ambitious insolence of one party naturally aroused the savage indignation of the other. Preparations for attack begot preparations for defence: the moral atmosphere of the Mountain became surcharged with the elements of the most direful hostility; isolated collisions—it is idle to inquire by whom begun, but characterized on both sides by native barbarity—became the precursors of the impending struggle. Bodies of armed men passed over from the Kesrouan into the Mixed districts, burning and killing as they marched. The Christians of Zahleh sallied forth to the contest, and war became inevitable.

Under these circumstances, what course was left open to the leaders of the Druse nation? To remain quietly in their homes, while the villages of their kindred were being burnt and plundered? It would have been the act of madmen and of cowards if they had done so. The Turkish authorities were evidently indisposed to prevent the impending collision, and nothing was left to them but to rise in their own defence. But is this act of natural valour to become confounded with the horrible massacres which subsequently occurred in localities beyond the precincts of the Mountain, and under the immediate protection of Turkish garrisons? If, in that inevitable sequence of events by which the struggles of barbarous tribes are too often terminated, and which on this occasion seems to have been especially aggravated by the interposition of official influences, horrible excesses were committed, is every Chief who summoned his followers around him, and prepared for the battle, or who even carried on the war according to the barbarous usages practised from time immemorial in the Mountain,—to be ruthlessly stigmatized as an assassin, or to be held responsible for all the excesses of his infuriated dependents? Above all, is he to pay the forfeit of his head, while the Turkish authorities who remained inactive spectators of the tumult, whose officers superintended the massacres and conducted the victims to the shambles, are suffered to escape?

The British Commissioner cannot remain silent while so gross a perversion of justice is proposed; and he is unable to admit, unless proof can be shown to the contrary, that the Turkish civil and military Pashas at Beyrout were not chiefly responsible for what occurred. It is equally impossible for him to recognize as a principle that the mere fact of the Chiefs of a barbarous tribe having taken part in a defensive war can be alleged as a capital offence; yet such seems to be the doctrine laid down by the Extraordinary Tribunal of Beyrout. The Ottoman authorities are dealt with as secondary criminals, whilst sentence of death is recorded against every one of the Druse Chiefs, most of whom are not even accused of having participated in the massacres, who voluntarily surrendered themselves into the hands of justice, and whose cases therefore demand, if not an indulgent, at all events an impartial, consideration.

With these few preliminary remarks the British Commissioner will now proceed to consider separately the case of each of the accused.

Khoorshid Pasha.—The proceedings before the Court have not brought to light any circumstance to diminish the responsibility naturally attaching to the prisoner as Governor-General of Saïda, for the disorders which have occurred within his jurisdiction. He appears to have remained an indifferent spectator, while villages were being burnt and plundered, and the most murderous hostilities were being waged, within an hour's march of his camp; and though solemnly warned by the Consuls of the Five European Powers, he took no step to prevent the consummation of a catastrophe which it is impossible to believe he did not foresee.

Did not these circumstances sufficiently establish the culpability of his conduct, the fact of the butchery of Christians having continued after his arrival at Deir-el-Kamar would place it beyond a doubt. Whether the consequence of

cowardice, imbecility, or design, a dereliction of duty which has resulted in so great a sacrifice of human life requires to be visited with the utmost severity.

Tahir Pasha.—The observations suggested by the perusal of the *procès-verbal* of Koorshid Pasha's trial are equally applicable to that of this prisoner. No circumstance has come to light calculated to diminish his responsibility as military Commander of the forces, and it is only too evident he made no serious effort to stop the effusion of blood.

Nouri Bey.—This prisoner's fatal neglect to do his duty is beyond doubt, and the sentence to be passed upon him cannot be too severe. As it may be presumed, however, that the attitude of his Chief may have influenced his conduct, and as it does not appear that he is implicated in any of the massacres, the British Commissioner would not think it unreasonable if a distinction were made between his guilt and that of the other more atrocious military criminals already condemned to death or executed.

Ali Wasfi Efendi.—The accused has been sentenced by the Court to temporary imprisonment and dismissal from the public service. The Minutes of evidence are so destitute of all materials for forming a true estimation of the prisoner's guilt or innocence, that it becomes difficult to pronounce any opinion on the *procès-verbal* which has been communicated to the Commissioners.

Ahmet Saleh Efendi.—The same observation is applicable to the *procès-verbal* of this prisoner.

Said Bey Jumblat.—Before proceeding to pronounce an opinion on the individual guilt or innocence of this prisoner, and his brother Mokatajis, the British Commissioner would wish to observe, that the sentence proposed to be passed by the Court is a sufficient indication that there has existed no desire on the part of the Prosecution for the Crown to shelter the accused from punishment; that the trial of all the prisoners has extended over several months, during the course of which the Government has had every facility for collecting evidence and prosecuting the case to the last extremity; that during the whole of this period the defendants have been immured in prison, and shut off from all communication with their friends outside; that, consequently, they have had no means of preparing a regular defence; that their cause has been adjudicated on Christian testimony alone; that no Druse witness has been examined; and that all the advantages of the situation have been on the side of the Prosecution.

Every pains, therefore, having been taken to secure a conviction, it necessarily follows that their acquittal or condemnation must not depend on any consideration foreign to the evidence with which we have been furnished; and that it would be a gross violation of justice were a decision to be arrived at independent of that which is authorized by the proceedings before the Court. This reserve becomes very important, from the fact that the judicial investigation on which we are engaged has been conducted during a season of intense political excitement; that the nation of which the prisoners are the Chiefs has become obnoxious to the hatred of a powerful and numerous community; that on such occasions the most unfounded calumnies are necessarily current; that the races among whom we lived are notoriously untruthful; and that it requires a considerable effort of the mind to release itself from the tyranny of public opinion, in order to adjudicate impartially on cases already disposed of by the prejudices of an infuriated and unscrupulous population.

It is therefore a matter which nearly concerns our honour that the verdict we are about to pronounce should be hereafter ratified by Europe, when the evidence which evoked it comes to be subjected to the impartial scrutiny of persons removed from the turbulent influences which surround ourselves.

With these few observations the British Commissioner now turns to the examination of the degree to which the first prisoner on the list, Said Bey Jumblat, may be supposed to have been implicated in the late transactions.

Before, however, considering the graver and more sweeping charge brought against this individual, as the principal author and promoter of the late horrible catastrophe in the Mountain, it may be more convenient to pass in review the minor allegations against him enumerated in the indictment.

These are five in number:—

1st. That he sent letters to the people of Jezzin to lull them into security.

2nd. That he gave his word to Tahir Pasha that no harm should happen to the inhabitants of Deir-el-Kamar.

3rd. That he received into his house Ismail-el-Attrash, and his followers, on their return from Zahleh.

4th. That he sent Ali Bey el Hamadi to Hasbeya, under the pretext of conducting his sister to Moktara, but really with the intention of assisting in the butchery of the Christians; and

5th. That he commissioned Zeed-ed-Deen to cut off the head of the Emir Said-ed-Deen Shehab of Hasbeya, and subsequently rewarded the emissary who executed this behest.

Of these, Nos. 3, 4, and 5 are very serious, and if either of the two last were to be considered proved, the British Commissioner would be of opinion that the infliction of capital punishment would be a well-merited penalty.

With regard to the two first accusations it does not appear that much importance can be attached to them. The letters written by Said Bey to the people of Jezzin seem to have been documents, containing injunctions and general exhortations to maintain the peace, which it seems probable the Druse Chief was anxious to preserve, and as the disturbances in that particular locality commenced by the Christians of Jezzin attacking the Druses of the Shooof, it would be unjust to strain the purport of communications written before the outbreak to the unnatural meaning with which it is now proposed to invest them.

To the accusation which stands second on the list, to the effect that Said Bey promised Tahir Pasha that no harm should happen to the people of Deir-el-Kamar, he is inclined to attach still less importance. He regards it, in fact, as an instance of that tendency, to which he has before alluded, to shift all the blame of what has happened from the shoulders of the Turkish authorities to those of the Druses. In the first place it is manifestly unjust to make a Druse Mokataji responsible for events which occurred in a town garrisoned by Turkish troops, and beyond his jurisdiction; and in the next, it appears from the evidence of one of the witnesses for the prosecution, that Said Bey had actually proposed, some time before the outbreak, to place his family under the protection of the officer in command of Bteddin, and that he had earnestly entreated the inhabitants of Deir-el-Kamar, not to surrender their arms, and not to allow Tahir Pasha to go away. Moreover, it is proved over and over again, that it was under the auspices of other Chiefs that the slaughter of the Christians of Deir-el-Kamar was conducted.

When we come to the third count, however, matters assume a graver aspect. It has been proved, indeed the prisoner himself acknowledges, that, immediately after the affair of Zahleh, Ismail-el-Attrash arrived at Mokhtara, and that he and his followers were received with all the accustomed honours by Said Bey. Such a circumstance as this naturally leads one to suspect that the movements of the Hauran Chief must have been more or less approved of by the prisoner, or, at all events, that he had been, to a certain degree, privy to his proceedings. Now, as it is a well-known fact that the massacres at Rasheya were the handiwork of Ismail-el-Attrash and his Arab and Druse followers, it would be scarcely unjust to consider that, by welcoming him to his roof, the prisoner had become, to some extent, an accomplice in his guilt.

Such, in fact, was the conclusion at which the British Commissioner arrived, when this significant fact was elicited, at the commencement of the proceedings, and he fully expected that collateral proof would have been forthcoming to place Said Bey's complicity beyond all doubt. He confesses, however, that in proportion as the real truth has come to be unfolded before the Court, the tendency of the evidence has been quite in the opposite direction. Said Bey is asked whether he did not send the ends of his wife's veil to the Chief of the Hauran, as an indication of the extremity in which he and his people stood. The prisoner denies that he did anything of the kind; and no atom of evidence is offered in support of the assertion. On the contrary, it is distinctly proved that, immediately on Said Bey's receiving intelligence of Attrash's arrival, he sent to inform the Government of the fact; and he seems to have been much more embarrassed than pleased by the event. It is true he did not subsequently close his gates when the Hauran Chieftain came to Mokhtara, nor did he refuse him

the honours customary on such an occasion; but he states that he absented himself from home as much as possible, that he acquainted the Government with the circumstance, and that the usages of the country and the exigencies of his own peculiar position rendered a certain amount of complaisance to his self-invited guest an imperative necessity. This plea does not seem unworthy of our consideration.

It is to be remembered that the Druses of the Lebanon, at the commencement of the proceedings, stood in danger of being utterly overwhelmed by their Christian enemies. In their extremity, the more desperate of their leaders summoned a kindred Chieftain of the Hauran to come to their assistance. On his way he and his wild followers burn, pillage, and destroy; and he is justly regarded by his victims as a blood-stained assassin: yet, by those he has come to rescue, he is naturally looked upon as a deliverer and a hero. Might it not have been difficult, if not impossible, for a brother Chief, however indisposed to approve of his excesses, to have driven him with ignominy from his door, and to have violated, in the person of a victorious ally, those rites of hospitality which in the East are esteemed so sacred? Such seems to be the excuse preferred by the prisoner; and the British Commissioner cannot but admit that in his opinion they greatly mitigate the importance of the circumstance referred to in the count under consideration.

The next charge against Said Bey Jumblat is that, under pretence of sending him on a mission to conduct his sister to Mokhtarah, he dispatched Ali Bey Hamadi to Hasbeya, in order to organize the massacres which took place there.

Here, however, we find ourselves again embarrassed by the discrepancy between the evidence and the deduction derived from it, disagreeably increased, in this instance, by the suspicious exaggeration of the phrases in which the accusation is conveyed. It seems an undoubted fact that Ali Hamadi and a number of Druses did set out, on the occasion referred to, for Hasbeya, and although it has been only proved that he arrived in the vicinity of the ill-fated village on the day in question, there is reason to believe he, and, at all events, some of his followers, passed over to the place before the massacres were finished. It might not then be unreasonable to conjecture, if we accept the theory of the events of the Mountain being a deep-laid plot, whose ramifications had been carefully elaborated by the conspirators, that so remarkable a coincidence must have been the result of an intentional combination; but even so, it is rather a dangerous stretch of the imagination to infer that Ali Hamadi must have been sent to organize a tragedy which was, probably, commenced before he arrived. But so far as our information enables us to form an opinion, there is no reason to suppose that the events in the Mountain at all possessed that deliberate character which is sought to be attributed to them, and it seems probable that, until hounded on by the Turkish garrisons, the Druses never contemplated the outrages they subsequently committed. Though the war raged all over the Lebanon, it was only in places where Turkish troops were present that those wholesale massacres occurred, and it is a fact worthy of especial notice that it was not until the arrival at Hasbeya of an emissary from Damascus that the signal was given for the slaughter.

It is to be remembered, moreover, that the massacres occurred immediately after the funeral of a Druse notable who had been mortally wounded in a previous combat with the Christians, and whose death appears to have caused an unusual degree of fermentation. Up to that moment the relation between the Druses outside the Sernil and the Christians within had not been unfriendly. No general butchery seems to have been either dreaded by the one party or contemplated by the other, though it is possible that ill-designing persons may have been prepared to seize with avidity the opportunity to stimulate, to an indefinite extent, the vindictive feelings aroused by the death of a favourite leader, and it is a very significant fact that Osman Bey was present at the ceremony in question.

At all events, the thread of evidence by which it is sought to connect Said Bey with the events of Hasbeya is far too slender to be depended on in a court of justice. Ali Hamadi, though apparently of late become an associate of Said Bey, cannot be looked upon as his dependent. On the contrary, he is a Mokataji and a Sheikh of a rival house, formerly in open hostility with the family of Jumblat, and apparently only subsequently reconciled to it by the sense of a

common danger. It might, therefore, be very unsafe to make Said Bey, however friendly their relations at the time may appear to have been, responsible for Ali Hamadi's conduct, or for the actions of those who accompanied him, even though they were, as it is somewhat vaguely alleged, Said Bey's own dependents. In the state of excitement which evidently prevailed an absent Chief can be held as little responsible for the excesses of his savage clansmen as a commander of disciplined troops for the outrages they commit in a town taken by assault. Druses and Christians both looked upon the affair as a war. At the commencement each party conducted it according to those savage rules which long usage has consecrated in the Mountain.

An unforeseen combination suddenly invested it with a character of unusual atrocity, but it does appear from the evidence before us that the prisoner at all contributed to give to the struggle, which it is known he earnestly deprecated, the sinister character it subsequently assumed. It would rather seem, as far as we are able to conjecture from the meagre materials before us, that Said Bey was all along the representative of the moderate party in the Druse camp at a moment when the danger which threatened his nation rendered moderation a questionable virtue, and evidently compromised his popularity. The fact of the followers of a rival house marching through his feudal village of Mokhtarah, singing the war-cry of another Chief, as was shown on the trial, the Christian nickname of "Hanna," which was applied to the prisoner by his own people in derision of his unpatriotic neutrality, his publicly beating the Druses who raised the war-cry, his having saved hundreds of Christians, and still more the fact of hundreds of Christians having trusted to him for protection, are all circumstances significant of this inclination.

That he sympathized with his co-religionists is probable; that he did not do all an impartial spectator would have done is certain; that he, perhaps, exulted over the discomfiture of his nation's enemies may be imagined; that he even regarded with indifference the atrocities which others committed is possible; but that there is any proof that he either organised or took any part in them cannot be pretended.

On the other hand, it may be urged that the difficulty in procuring evidence sufficient to commit the prisoner is not the result of his innocence, but of his superior cunning; that with the duplicity in which Orientals are such adepts he secretly fomented the troubles he pretended to appease, and that while he saved some to bear witness in his favour in case a day of retribution should arrive, he secretly incited the less cautious of his brother Chiefs to commit the crimes he was too prudent to engage in himself.

Such conduct would not have been without example in the annals of Eastern nations, and the conjecture is not sufficiently improbable to require us to discard it without examination, if countenanced by a fair amount of collateral evidence. In the particular case under consideration, however, the British Commissioner is of opinion that there is no trustworthy indication which would warrant such an interpretation of the prisoner's conduct, and that if due allowance be made for the natural passions which must influence a man whose nation was in danger of extirpation at the hands of a hostile tribe, it may be even a matter of surprise that his conduct should not have been more ambiguous.

We now come to the most grave, because the most definite, charge which has been brought against Said Bey, to the effect that he commissioned a certain Zeed-ed-Deen to go to Hasbeya, and bring him the head of the Mahomedan Emir Said-ed-Deen. If this were proved, nothing would be more damning to the prisoner; and we should be relieved from the painful responsibility of extricating the truth from the mass of suspicious evidence before us. But when we come to examine the testimony upon which the charge is based, it dissolves into the same unsubstantial elements which have already so often disappointed our search.

In the first place, no proof is given that the person in question ever received any such commission from Said Bey; or, in the next, that he had anything to do with the murder of the Emir. It is true the latter fact is taken for granted, on the authority of a mazbatta presented to the Grand Medjlis at Damascus; but an examination of that document will only afford an instance of the rash mode in which the Tribunal is disposed to deal with evidence.

So far from containing any satisfactory proof of Zeed-ed-Deen having been the author of the alleged crime, the persons who signed the mazbatta expressly

state that they could not see who it was who was cutting off the head, and that they only conjectured it must have been Zeed-ed-Deen, because a woman told them it was he. As a crowning illustration of the utter untrustworthiness of such an assumption, it may not be out of place to mention that the Tribunal of Mokhtara have already condemned, on the evidence of eye-witnesses, two other persons for the commission of the very crime of which Zeed-ed-Deen is therein accused. Could a more flagrant instance be adduced to warn us of the extreme caution we must use in accepting, as proved, the loose statements on which the Tribunal seems to have founded their conclusions?

Having thus gone through the separate allegations, let us now examine the general and most sweeping charge of all, the charge on which the Tribunal seems to be inclined to lay the greatest stress, and which heads and concludes the indictment against the prisoner. It is couched pretty much in the following terms: "Said Bey, as the supreme head of all the Druse Chiefs and Mokatajis, took a principal share in all the events of the Mountain, whether great or small, and was the moral organizer and author of all that happened." The question which we have to ask ourselves is, whether this assertion has been proved by the evidence adduced before the Court. The British Commissioner is compelled to admit that it has not. In the first place, it seems incorrect to describe Said Bey Djumblatt as head of the Druse Chiefs. As far as we know anything of the internal organization of that nation, it would seem to consist of a Federal association of independent feudal Chiefs often at enmity with one another. To attribute anything like absolute power to Said Bey, is evidently a gross exaggeration. In social rank Said Bey is inferior to the House of Raslan; and in official position he is merely on a par with the other Mokatajis. It is true his wealth may have secured to him in time of peace considerable importance; but his pre-eminence never outsoared the pretensions of rival houses, or even, as it appears in the evidence, protected his property from the forays of hostile Chiefs. To say, therefore, that in moments of great excitement, when the existence of the nation was at stake, and when the Councils of the more violent and martial of its leaders would be likely to prevail, that Said Bey must be held responsible for whatever was determined is evidently an unjust conclusion. Yet it is upon this assumption that the chief accusations which have been brought against him are based. Ismail-el-Attrach, and a horde of Arabs come from the Hauran to save his fellow Druses from the extremity of danger; it is Said Bey's crime that they did not immediately disperse. The unfortunate Christians of Hasbeya, Rasheya, and Deir-el-Kamar, three places garrisoned by Turkish troops, and beyond the precincts of the Lebanon, are barbarously murdered; it is Said Bey who must have organized the massacre. The Christians of Jezzin imprudently begin to burn the villages of their Druse neighbours, the Druses rally, and in their turn pillage and slaughter the Christian aggressors; it is Said Bey who must have planned the whole affair, although it is clearly proved on the testimony of the Christians themselves, as far as human evidence can show, that so far from having either organised or taken part in the horrors which have occurred, the prisoner had all along declared himself averse to the war; had proposed in case of attack to place himself under the protection of the Turkish garrison of Deir-el-Kamar; had more than once remarked with obvious truth that he had everything to lose, and nothing to gain by the impending event; had written letters earnestly enjoining the preservation of the peace; had requested Tahir Pasha not to leave the Christians unprotected; had recommended the Christians of Deir-el-Kamar not to give up their arms; had been seen to beat some of his followers who wished to raise the war-cry; had acquired among his countrymen the nickname of "Hanna Bey," on account of his unpatriotic moderation; had been instrumental in sheltering and saving in his own house hundreds of Christian refugees; and was considered by both parties so exonerated from all participation in the disturbances as to have been excluded from the customary "mada mamada," or declaration of peace; and, finally, voluntarily surrendered himself to take his trial, when his brother Chieftains fled to the Hauran.

In the face of so much evidence tending to the exculpation of the prisoner, it becomes impossible to attach much weight to the contradictory and evidently untrustworthy testimony of the few persons who have alleged anything really tangible against the prisoner, while the mass of hearsay testimony which has been allowed, most improperly, to encumber the proceedings, must be discarded

with contempt. Under these circumstances, the only course left open to the British Commissioner, is to express his deliberate opinion that it does not appear on the face of the proceedings that the prisoner either organized or authorized the late massacres in the Lebanon, and that consequently the judgment proposed by the Tribunal must be revised.

Hussein Talhook.—This prisoner is stated to be the oldest of the Mokatajis, and among those who are second in point of influence. He is accused of having had arms in his hands at the attack of Hadeth and Baabdah; but it is to be remembered, that on the day before the fight which took place around these villages, their inhabitants, accompanied by 400 Christians, who had arrived the evening before from the Kesrouan, had sallied forth into the Druse country, burning and slaughtering as they went. This movement, together with a corresponding one made by the Christians of the Metn, may be regarded as the outbreak of the war. The counter demonstration of the Druses was the natural consequence of the aggression made upon them. But though many houses in Hadeth and Baabdah were burned, it is not pretended that either village was the scene of any massacre. Indeed, but few persons, either Druse or Christian, lost their lives on this occasion. There is something, therefore, extremely revolting to find that an aged man, past 70, is condemned to death, because in such a moment he should have appeared on the scene with the intention, as he himself very plainly asserts, to prevent the further spread of disorder. Had he been a young man, and had he even been proved to have been the most active leader in the attack, he would scarcely have merited any very severe punishment; but under existing circumstances to record a capital sentence against the accused, is simply absurd.

Assad Talhook.—The above observations are equally applicable to this prisoner.

Hussein Bek Noked.—The prisoner is accused of having been present on the occasion of the first conflict in the neighbourhood of Deir-el-Kamar. This incident, however, must not be confounded with the massacres of which that unfortunate town became the theatre eighteen days later. The two events are quite distinct, and no peculiarity distinguished the first from any of the ordinary collisions usual between hostile tribes. There are consequently no grounds for confounding this prisoner with those persons who promoted or organized the massacres which took place on the occasion of the subsequent attack on Deir-el-Kamar, nearly a month afterwards.

Assad Amad.—The above observations are equally applicable to this prisoner, who seems to have been merely present at the siege of Zahleh, but against whom no particular charge is laid.

Mir Mehmed Kasim Raslan.—The prisoner was present at the fight at Hadeth; and the same observations are applicable to his case as those which the British Commissioner has already had the honour of submitting to his colleagues in reference to Hussein and Assad Talhook.

Selim Jumblatt.—The prisoner is accused of heading a band of marauders, who pillaged and maltreated women in Jezzin, and the charge is supported by several *mazbattas*, drawn up at the invitation of the Mudir of that district. If the statements contained in these documents could be substantiated, the accused may certainly be considered deserving of severe punishment. Unfortunately, however, they are such mere *ex parte* statements, of so vague and loose a character, as to render it difficult to found any judicial conclusion upon them. The fact of the people of Jezzin having been the first to begin the attack, as has been already mentioned, must also be taken into account.

Jemal-ed-Din Hamdan.—The evidence against this prisoner consists of a document still more unsatisfactory, and quite inadmissible in a Court of Justice.

Mika-ed-Din Shibli.—The guilt of this prisoner as the murderer of the Principal of the Convent of Amik may be considered proved.

Ali Said.—The evidence against the prisoner is very grave. Unfortunately, he does not seem to have been confronted with the persons who bore witness against him, their depositions having been taken before the Mudir of Deir-el-Kamar. The prisoner has complained of this irregularity, and the omission is enough to make the British Commissioner hesitate before subscribing to the sentence of death pronounced against him.

Beshir Mirai Noked.—The guilt of this Chief is undoubted, not only on the evidence adduced in the indictment, but on other corroborative testimony which subsequent investigations have disclosed.

(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 3 in No. 491.

MM. Béclard, Rehfués, Novikow, and Lord Dufferin, to Fuad Pasha.

Beyrout, le 23 Février, 1861.

LES Soussignés, après avoir pris connaissance des pièces du procès des fonctionnaires Ottomans et des Sheikhs Druses détenus à Beyrouth, croient devoir se borner à constater que de ces pièces il ne résulte aucune circonstance atténuante, de nature à établir avec certitude que les fonctionnaires et officiers Ottomans ne sont pas responsables en principe des événements qui ont ensanglanté la Montagne, et amené le massacre de 6,000 Chrétiens. Dans la pensée des quatre Commissaires de France, de Grande Bretagne, de Prusse, et de Russie, cette responsabilité continue, ils ont regret à le dire, à peser sur les Agents de l'autorité Ottomane, au moins autant que sur les plus coupables des Chefs Druses, et la différence des châtimens infligés aux uns et aux autres ne trouve pas, à leurs yeux, la justification suffisante dans les pièces du procès soumises à leur examen.

En conséquence les Soussignés ont l'honneur d'inviter son Excellence Fuad Pasha à suppléer par sa propre initiative, et dans le légitime exercice des pleins pouvoirs dont il est muni, en consultant à la fois les inspirations de sa conscience et les nécessités aussi impérieuses qu'urgentes de la justice, à ce qu'il y a d'incomplet dans l'instruction, et d'inéquitable dans les sentences du Tribunal de Beyrouth, et à terminer le plus promptement possible cette œuvre de répression dont les lenteurs ont entravé depuis six mois le rétablissement de l'ordre dans le Liban.

(Signé) L. BECLARD.
DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.
REHFUES.
NOVIKOW.

Inclosure 4 in No. 491.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, February 24, 1861.

I NEED not say what a pleasure and relief it was to me to receive the telegram your Excellency has been good enough to forward from Lord John Russell, announcing that both Her Majesty's Government and the Government of His Imperial Majesty the Emperor of the French concurred in the opinion that the execution of one or two Druse Chiefs or ringleaders would satisfy the exigencies of public justice.

One of the responsibilities which I have felt the most painfully during the transaction of the business in which I have been engaged during the last six months has been that which involved the expression of an opinion on matters of life and death. This duty I have been endeavouring hitherto to discharge to the best of my ability; and wherever I have been able conscientiously to do so, my voice has been raised on the side of mercy. The Minute I have forwarded in another despatch of this day's date was already written when the telegram arrived, and, as your Excellency will perceive, I had determined to consent to the execution of only two of the Druse Chiefs.

But in announcing this resolution to the Commission, I felt I should

probably provoke a considerable amount of disagreeable opposition, and that it would require some persistence to make it prevail.

Under these circumstances, it was a great satisfaction to me to find that I had only anticipated the humane wishes of Her Majesty's Government, and that I need not fear having weakly sacrificed the interests of a necessary justice to any misplaced feeling of clemency.

The same timely interposition, I am happy to say, will also save the lives of the twenty or thirty unfortunate wretches condemned by the Tribunal of Mokhtara. It was much against my will that these misguided men, however blood-stained they might be, were doomed to death, and it was only the dread of betraying the mission on which I was sent that enabled me to go through the disagreeable duty of subscribing to the infliction of capital punishment upon them. Now that Her Majesty's Government has relieved me from all responsibility of this kind, I shall continue to prosecute my other duties under much pleasanter auspices.

It is a melancholy satisfaction to think that we shall have no difficulty in selecting the single individual who is to suffer. There is at present in the prison at Beyrout a Druse Chief of some importance whose guilt is so atrocious and clearly proved that all the Commissioners have recorded a unanimous verdict against him.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 5 in No. 491.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, February 24, 1861.

IN continuation of my despatch of the 15th instant I beg to transmit herewith, for your Excellency's information, five other clauses which have been added to those already agreed upon by the Commissioners as a basis for their projected report on the re-organization of the Lebanon.

By clause No. 14 your Excellency will perceive that the Metn, formerly a portion of the Christian Kaimakamship, and whose population is composed of 30,000 Maronites, 10,000 Orthodox Greeks, and 5,000 Druses, is constituted a Mixed district, and that the non-Christian element will send as many representatives to the Medjlis as the Christian.

I may observe, however, that since these regulations were drawn up I have received instructions from Her Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to invite the Commission to confine their attention to the Lebanon.

This circumstance may cause considerable modifications to be proposed in the plan of which these clauses were intended to form the skeleton.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 6 in No. 491.

Articles 12 to 16 of the Basis for the Future Government of Syria.

Article 12. AU lieu des vingt-quatre anciens Mokâtas, le Liban sera divisé en six circonscriptions, savoir :—

1. Le Kûrah, y compris la partie inférieure, et les autres fractions de territoire avoisinantes, qui devront y être annexées, conformément au principe énoncé en l'Article 4.

2. La partie septentrionale, sauf le Kûrah, jusqu'au Nahir-el-Kelb.

3. Zahleh et son territoire.

4. Le Metn, y compris le Sahel Chrétien, et les territoires du Kata et de Salîma.

5. Le territoire à population mixte, situé au sud de la route de Damas, jusqu'à Jezzîn.

6. Le Jezzîn, auquel seront rattachés les groupes Maronites environnants.

Art. 13. Le Medjlis Judiciaire de première instance siégera au chef-lieu de

chaque circonscription, et se composera de trois membres au moins, six au plus, selon le nombre des éléments constitutifs de la population, et de telle façon que chacun d'eux soit représenté par un membre.

Dans le cas où il n'y aurait que deux éléments, le tribunal sera composé de trois membres, dont deux fournis par l'élément prépondérant.

La présidence sera exercée à tour de rôle, et mensuellement, par chacun des membres du Medjlis, et en cas de partage le Président aura toujours voix prépondérante.

Art. 14. Le Medjlis Administratif se composera dans chaque conscription, conformément au principe adopté pour le Medjlis Judiciaire, de trois membres au moins, et six membres au plus.

Dans les circonscriptions désignées à l'Article 12 sous les numéros 4 et 5, le Medjlis Administratif sera composé de six membres, dont trois Chrétiens et trois non-Chrétiens.

Art. 15. Les membres des Medjlis Administratifs et Judiciaires de première et de seconde instance seront choisis et délégués par les Chefs de leurs communautés respectives, et institués par le Gouverneur.

Art. 16. Si après une enquête poursuivie par le Medjlis Judiciaire Central il est prouvé qu'un membre des Medjlis Administratifs ou Judiciaires de première instance a prévariqué, ou s'est rendu par un fait quelconque indigne de ses fonctions, ce membre devra être révoqué par le Gouverneur, et sera, en outre, passible d'une peine proportionnée à la faute qu'il aura commise.

(Suivent les paraphes.)

No. 492.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received March 13.)

(No. 370.)

My Lord,

Paris, March 12, 1861.

I HAD the honour to receive this morning your Lordship's despatch No. 291 of yesterday's date, informing me that Her Majesty's Government must continue to insist on the evacuation of Syria by the 5th of June, but stating that, with regard to the Convention proposed by M. Thouvenel, of which a copy was inclosed in my despatch No. 352 of the 10th instant, Her Majesty's Government would not refuse to agree to it, provided the evacuation, at the period above-mentioned, were to be positively assured by an alteration of the concluding phrase.

Your Lordship will have learnt, from my despatch No. 363 of yesterday's date, that M. Thouvenel had consented to make the 5th of June the period at which the European occupation of Syria shall cease and the evacuation shall have been effected, but that he would not agree to any stipulation respecting the destination of the troops after they should have been re-embarked. I felt confident then that the two Articles which I had the honour to submit in that despatch for your Lordship's consideration would meet with his concurrence; and, as my last instructions gave me latitude to come to an understanding with his Excellency, I took them to him this morning, hoping to be able to report to your Lordship that, by their acceptance, the Conference would meet, and the question be set at rest.

In order, however, that Her Majesty's Government might remain supreme arbiters, in case of any further difficulty, I was careful to tell M. Thouvenel that I was acting under general instructions, which allowed me to seek the means of reconciling the objections of the French Government to the wording of the draft Convention proposed by Her Majesty's Government, with the requirements of Her Majesty's Government that the Convention should contain a positive declaration that Syria should be evacuated by the 5th of June, and that I had accordingly framed the Articles as closely as possible to those proposed by Her Majesty's Government, but without containing the words to which M. Thouvenel had taken objection.

I regret to say that my expectations were disappointed. M. Thouvenel took exception to the clause "l'occupation aura atteint son terme définitif," which he said bound the French Government too strongly, but he offered no objection to the rest. Now, it is true that in strict parlance the French Govern-

ment would be as much bound without this clause by the words, "évacuation aura été effectuée;" but with every wish to be conciliatory, I felt that something was due to my own dignity (I do not mean to use the word in a captious sense), and that having made this conciliatory proposal in order to meet M. Thouvenel's objections, real or imaginary, to the wording of the original draft proposed by Her Majesty's Government, a stand ought to be made against further concessions, particularly as the objections raised by M. Thouvenel showed that in some way or other he wanted to avoid the obligations which it was the object of Her Majesty's Government to impose upon him.

I had less hesitation in making a stand, because, as I have said before, I felt that it would always be in the power of Her Majesty's Government, if appealed to, to consent to the omission of the words objected to by M. Thouvenel.

I said then to M. Thouvenel that I could not make any further concession, and, taking your Lordship's despatch as my text, I contrasted the conduct of Her Majesty's Government in this business with that of the French Government, and I said that I should be perfectly prepared to submit the one and the other to the impartial judgment of Europe.

M. Thouvenel then said that he would take the Emperor's orders; that in the meantime he should probably learn from M. de Flahault the result of the interview which that Ambassador would no doubt have had with your Lordship to-day, and that he would give me an answer to-morrow.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

No. 493.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received March 14.)

(No. 377. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Paris, March 13, 1861.

THE Prussian Minister informs me that he had a great deal of conversation with Count Bismark Bohlen, who was the bearer of Lord Dufferin's last despatches, and who had been passing some months in Syria, charged, with other offices, with the distribution of the funds raised in Prussia for the relief of the sufferers in the events of last summer.

Count Bismark Bohlen states that it is impossible to deny that there is a general feeling, not only among the native Christians, but among the Missionaries, who, being chiefly American and Protestant, cannot be suspected of desiring to favour the Roman Catholic element,—that the departure of the French troops will be followed by a repetition of the bloody scenes of last year; but upon being questioned by Count Pourtalès, he expressed the opinion that the presence of ships of war at different points along the coast would be sufficient to ensure the preservation of tranquillity.

He is also convinced that the Turks are of themselves quite able to prevent the renewal of disorder if they choose to do so, they having from 15,000 to 20,000 men with plenty of artillery in Syria, but he thinks that they are not to be trusted, founding this opinion upon their conduct last year.

I remarked to M. de Pourtalès that it was not to be conceived that the Porte should be so blind to its own interests as to connive at acts the renewal of which must make Europe seriously consider how far the supremacy of the Sultan was compatible with the dictates of humanity, and in this opinion M. de Pourtalès seemed to coincide.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

Lord J. Russell to Sir H. Bulwer.

(No. 149.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, March 13, 1861.

IN your despatch No. 418 of the 17th of last July, you say, in speaking of the settlement of Syria: "It appears to me that the independent Governments of the Mountain are incompatible with order and society; that one Government should be established in Syria, and that Government ameliorated."

Lord Dufferin, after some experience in Syria, arrived at the conclusion which your Excellency's sagacity had enabled you to anticipate.

But the jealousy of the Porte having induced the Sultan to object to any inquiry or report on the part of the European Commission with regard to Syria, I directed Lord Dufferin to restrict his proposals to the Commission to the Mountain only.

But every day's experience confirms the soundness of your Excellency's original judgment, and the despatch of Lord Dufferin No. 119 of the 12th ultimo places the reason for that judgment in a very striking point of view.

You will endeavour to show to Aali Pasha that the Sultan's jealousy of his own servants may be carried too far; that in the present state of the Turkish Empire, to choose able and honest Governors of Provinces, and to confer upon them large powers in a spirit of liberal and generous confidence, is true wisdom.

If the difficult and responsible charge of governing Syria is broken up into fragments, and its tenure made precarious, no good government can flow out of such niggardly policy; disorders will be renewed; and the Sultan may find, when it is too late, that he is obliged to surrender to foreign Princes and States powers which he had refused to confide to his own faithful servants.

I am, &c.

(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 495.

Lord J. Russell to Lord A. Loftus.

(No. 35.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, March 13, 1861.

I TRANSMIT to your Lordship herewith a copy of a despatch from Lord Dufferin to Sir Henry Bulwer,* respecting the discussions which have taken place among the European Commissioners in Syria with reference to the sentences passed by the tribunal at Beyrout on the Turkish and Druse prisoners tried before it, on the charge of having taken part in the massacre of the Christians last summer.

Your Lordship will perceive from this despatch the view taken by the respective Commissioners of the guilt or innocence of the respective prisoners, and the manner in which they severally incline to recommend that each prisoner should be dealt with.

Your Lordship will further observe that while the Austrian, British, and Russian Commissioners lean more or less to the side of mercy, the French and Prussian Commissioners concur in promoting the indiscriminate execution of all the Druse prisoners now under sentence at Beyrout.

You will find in Lord Dufferin's despatch an inclosure containing a very able statement of the grounds on which he has come to the conclusion that public justice will be satisfied by a limited number of executions, and that as regards the large majority of cases, and more particularly as regards that of Said Bey Jumblatt, the evidence adduced on the trial is wholly insufficient to warrant their conviction, and still less their capital punishment.

Her Majesty's Government have seen with some surprise the part taken by the French Commissioner, as they had reason to suppose from M. Thouvenel's language to Lord Cowley, as reported in the despatch of which I inclose a copy, that the French Commissioner would receive instructions which would induce him to moderate the number of executions. It is true those instructions applied specifically to the case of the Druses tried at Mokhtarah; but the

* Inclosure 1 in No. 491.

principle on which they were founded was susceptible of a more extended application.

On receiving from Lord Dufferin ten days ago a telegram stating the conclusion at which he had arrived in regard to Said Bey Jumblatt, I instructed his Lordship and likewise Sir H. Bulwer to insist, the former with Fuad Pasha and the latter with the Porte, that Said Bey Jumblatt should not be executed; and it appears from a telegram which I have since received from Sir H. Bulwer that the Porte has promised to instruct Fuad Pasha not to execute that Chief.

Under all these circumstances I have to instruct your Lordship to call Baron Schleinitz's attention to this subject. You may place in his Excellency's hands the statement read to his colleagues by Lord Dufferin, and you will give him such a general account of what has passed between the Commissioners according to Lord Dufferin's report, as may, it is to be hoped, satisfy his Excellency of the propriety of instructing the Prussian Commissioner at Beyrout no longer to insist on the indiscriminate execution of the prisoners there under sentence of death, but to confine himself within the limits which Lord Dufferin so clearly shows to comprise all those whose guilt has been satisfactorily established.

If Baron Schleinitz should be willing to act in this matter you will further urge his Excellency to lose no time in sending his instructions to Beyrout, for every day's delay in bringing questions arising out of the trials at Beyrout to a close must necessarily act unfavourably on the deliberations of the Commissioners on the other matters which they are required to investigate and determine.

I am, &c.

(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 496.

Lord J. Russell to Earl Cowley.

(No. 309.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, March 13, 1861.

HER Majesty's Government entirely approve the draft of Convention which your Excellency sent with your despatch No. 363 of the 11th instant, and your Excellency is directed to propose it to the Conference; and if your words are not adopted, which, however, you are to press as far as possible, your Excellency will take care that in any words which may be substituted, the object which Her Majesty's Government have in view, namely, the complete evacuation of Syria by the 5th of June shall be fully secured.

I am, &c.

(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 497.

Lord J. Russell to Earl Cowley.

(No. 313.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, March 14, 1861.

THE Marquis de Chateaurenard called here to-day and read a despatch respecting the Commission in Syria. M. Thouvenel proposes that the Commissioners, when they shall have finished their Report, shall go to Constantinople and assist the Ambassadors in settling the terms of the future government of the Lebanon with the Ministers of the Sultan.

I said I thought the Commissioners ought to finish their Report as soon as possible; but I thought it would be more useful that they should remain in Syria to assist Fuad Pasha, or any other Governor appointed by the Porte, than that they should go at once to Constantinople with their Report.

The Marquis de Chateaurenard having asked me how long I thought the Commissioners ought to stay in Syria, I said till the beginning or middle of May; that, however, I did not pretend to have formed any very settled opinion on this point.

The Marquis de Chateaurenard spoke of the terms of the Convention for the continuance of the European occupation, but I said that question was in the

hands of your Excellency, and that I had sent your Excellency my final instructions.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 498.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received March 15.)

(No. 393.)

My Lord,

Paris, March 14, 1861.

IN the course of the conversation which I had with M. Thouvenel this morning, he said that by the last advices which he had received from Beyrout, he had reason to believe that Fuad Pasha was about to undertake an expedition against the Hauran, with a view of obliging the Druse Chiefs who had taken refuge there to capitulate or to go elsewhere. The French troops are not to take part in this expedition, but are to remain in the Lebanon.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

No. 499.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received March 15.)

(No. 396.)

My Lord,

Paris, March 14, 1861.

I HAD the honour to inform your Lordship in my despatch No. 370 of the 12th instant, that M. Thouvenel had promised to let me know on the following day whether the French Government would accept the two Articles relative to the evacuation of Syria which I had offered for their consideration. I did not hear from his Excellency until late in the afternoon yesterday, when he wrote to inform me that M. de Flahault and your Lordship had agreed upon a wording different from that which I had transmitted to you.

As this information was the result of a mistake which has since been cleared up, I do not dwell upon it further.

This morning, then, I waited upon M. Thouvenel, having in the meantime received an invitation from his Excellency to attend a Conference to-morrow, for the purpose of stating to him that at that Conference I intended to propose the adoption of the two Articles.

M. Thouvenel made the same objections to the words "terme définitif" which he had raised the other day. He said that they were useless; that the object of Her Majesty's Government was completely attained by the words "aura été évacuée;" and that therefore to insist on retaining the words "terme définitif," was to wound unnecessarily the susceptibility of the French Government.

I would admit, I replied, that the term "aura été évacuée" expressed all that I was desired to obtain; and I should not, therefore, consider myself so strictly bound to insist on the retention of the other words, were it not that the anxiety of the French Government to set them aside made me apprehensive that the interests which I was bound to guard might possibly be jeopardized by further conciliation. If the French Government really intended that Syria should be evacuated by the 5th of June, why were they to object to the phrase in question?

M. Thouvenel rejoined by giving me his word of honour that he intended the evacuation by the 5th of June. All he desired was, not to have the appearance towards the public of having abandoned, under every possible contingency, the Christians of the Lebanon to any fate that might be reserved for them. Although I had told him that Her Majesty's Government did not intend to dispute the right of the French or of any other Government to propose the reassembling of a Conference, should one or other deem it necessary, he feared that the words "terme définitif" might be quoted hereafter as a Treaty engagement preventing the possibility, under any circumstances whatever, of a prolonged occupation. Supposing, for instance, at the moment the troops were about to

embark it was patent to every-one that a massacre would be the consequence, he wished to reserve to himself the right of proposing the reassembling of the Conference, and of consulting the Allies of the Porte as to the advisability of carrying the evacuation into execution, of course they would be equally at liberty to consent or to refuse to attend.

I repeated to M. Thouvenel what I had stated to him on former occasions, that Her Majesty's Government had no intention of laying down as a positive dogma that under no possible circumstances could a fresh Conference be proposed; but they desired to be assured, I said, that in admitting for conciliation's sake that for which they saw no real necessity, viz., the prolongation of the occupation of Syria for three months, they were not preparing the way for fresh difficulties and dissidences hereafter, i.e., that if at the end of three months the same state of things was to exist in Syria as now—apparent tranquillity, declaration of the Porte that it was able to maintain that tranquillity, and consequent demand for evacuation—Her Majesty's Government were not to be called upon to consent to a further prolongation because there was no organized Government in the Lebanon, or for some other excuse equally futile.

M. Thouvenel replied that he perfectly understood the ground on which Her Majesty's Government took their stand, and that he was satisfied with the explanation which I had given him, but he still continued to press for the suppression of the, to him, obnoxious phrase. I consented at last to meet him half way, and so far to give into his wishes as to strike out the word "définitif." The Article, therefore, will stand thus:—

"La durée de l'occupation Européenne en Syrie sera prolongée au 5 Juin de la présente année, époque à laquelle il est entendue entre les Hautes Parties Contractantes qu'elle aura atteint son terme, et que l'évacuation aura été effectuée."

I trust that your Lordship will not disapprove my having made this concession, in order to terminate this matter amicably.

The addition of the word "définitif" to "terme" hardly makes the expression stronger, if the remainder of the sentence is taken into consideration, nor could a Government determined not to be bound by the weaker phrase make much difficulty of setting aside the stronger.

M. Thouvenel is very anxious that the Turkish Ambassador should himself propose the prolongation of the occupation; but Vefyk Efendi declines doing so. I think that Vefyk is right; that having declared his Government to be able to maintain order and tranquillity in Syria, and having consented only on pressure to submit to his Government the prolongation to the 1st of May, he cannot now turn round and propose the 5th of June. When, therefore, M. Thouvenel asked me to urge his views on Vefyk, I refused, observing that I could not advise another to do what in his place I would not do myself.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

No. 500.

Lord J. Russell to Earl Cowley.

(No. 327.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, March 15, 1861.

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 396 of yesterday, reporting a further conversation with M. Thouvenel, respecting the terms in which the proposed Convention for the prolongation of the stay of French troops in Syria for a limited period should be drawn up, and I have to repeat to you, as I have already stated to you by the telegraph, that Her Majesty's Government approve the version of the first Article of that Convention which is embodied in your despatch.

Your Excellency will have, however, perceived from my telegram that Her Majesty's Government are not prepared to agree to any addition being made to the terms of the Article suggested in your despatch implying the existence of an understanding that, if necessary, the occupation of Syria may be prolonged

beyond the 5th of June; or to any declaration to that effect being recorded in the Protocol of the Conference about to be held.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 501.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received March 16.)

(No. 408.)

My Lord,

Paris, March 15, 1861.

THE Conference on Syrian affairs met again this afternoon.

M. Thouvenel opened the proceedings by asking the Plenipotentiaries to inform him of the opinions of their respective Governments on the observations made in the sitting of the Conference on the 19th February.

Prince Metternich, as Plenipotentiary of Austria, being the first to speak, said that his Government was willing to consent to the prolongation of the occupation for a limited period; that period it had been suggested should be two months; but as a month had expired since the suggestion had been made, he considered that a term of three months from the date of the first Convention might be taken as the period for the further extension of the occupation.

M. Thouvenel, as French Plenipotentiary, said that he maintained his opinion that the occupation ought to be prolonged.

It being my turn to speak, I said that nothing had reached Her Majesty's Government since I had last the honour of addressing the Conference a month ago, to induce them to modify the opinion of which I had then been the organ; but that, nevertheless, Her Majesty's Government had authorised me, if I found a general opinion existing among my colleagues that the evacuation ought to be delayed, and if the Porte agreed to a delay, to consent, for conciliation's sake, to a prolongation of the occupation, provided always that the evacuation should take place within three months. I reserved to myself, therefore, should I find my colleagues disposed to a delay, to propose such a wording of the instrument prolonging the occupation as would secure the object which Her Majesty's Government had in view.

M. Thouvenel expressed his satisfaction at the conciliatory spirit shown by Her Majesty's Government, and said that he was ready to agree to the term of three months.

Count Pourtalès, the Prussian Plenipotentiary, spoke in the sense of the Austrian Plenipotentiary.

General Kisseleff, the Russian Plenipotentiary, adhered to the period of three months, expressing the hope that within that time the institution of a regular Government would insure order and tranquillity in the Lebanon.

Vefyk Efendi said, that although he must maintain what he had stated on a former occasion, that the Porte was ready and able to maintain tranquillity in Syria, yet that, out of deference to the opinions of the Powers who by their counsel and assistance had come to the Sultan's aid, he had been empowered to assent to the prolongation of the occupation to the 1st of May, and not doubting that his Government would, for the same reason, accept the prolongation of the former Convention for three months, he would take upon himself to sign an instrument to that effect, on the understanding that the evacuation should have terminated at the date agreed upon.

M. Thouvenel observed that I had a proposal to make with that intent, and having requested me to state it to the Conference I proposed the signature of the two Articles which have received the assent of Her Majesty's Government. The Conference accepted them without further discussion, and the instrument, of which I have the honour to transmit herewith a copy, was immediately signed.

The Turkish Plenipotentiary having expressed the wish to refer, for form's sake, to Constantinople before turning this instrument into a Convention, it was agreed that the signature of the latter Act should take place on Tuesday the 19th instant.

On the same occasion, the Protocols of the first and second Conferences will be signed.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

Inclosure in No. 501.

Draft Convention agreed to in a Conference held at Paris, March 15, 1861.

LEURS Majestés l'Empereur d'Autriche, l'Empereur des Français, la Reine du Royaume Uni de la Grande Bretagne et d'Irlande, le Roi de Prusse, l'Empereur de toutes les Russies, et l'Empereur des Ottomans, après les explications échangées entre leurs Gouvernements respectifs, s'étant entendus pour modifier la Convention conclue entre eux, le 5 Septembre dernier, les Représentants de leurs dites Majestés sont tombés d'accord sur les Articles suivants, qui seront textuellement convertis en une Convention dont les instruments vont être aussitôt préparés pour être revêtus de leurs signatures :—

ARTICLE I.

La durée de l'occupation Européenne en Syrie sera prolongée jusqu'au 5 Juin de la présente année, époque à laquelle il est entendu entre les Hautes Parties Contractantes qu'elle aura atteint son terme et que l'évacuation aura été effectuée.

ARTICLE II.

Les stipulations contenues dans le deuxième Article de la Convention du 5 Septembre, 1860, en tant qu'elles n'ont point encore été exécutées, ou qu'elles ne sont pas modifiées par la présente Convention, demeureront en vigueur pendant la période qui s'écoulera entre la date de la signature de cet Acte et le 5 Juin de l'année courante.

ARTICLE III.

La présente Convention sera ratifiée, et les ratifications en seront échangées à Paris, dans le délai de cinq semaines, ou plus tôt si faire se peut.

Les Plenipotentiaires sont convenus de se réunir Mardi prochain, 19, pour signer la Convention.

Paris, le 15 Mars, 1861.

No. 502.

Lord J. Russell to Earl Cowley.

(No. 329.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, March 16, 1861.

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 408 of yesterday, reporting what had passed in the Conference on Syrian affairs, and inclosing the copy of the Protocol in which the results of that Conference would be recorded; and I have to acquaint your Excellency that Her Majesty's Government entirely approve your conduct throughout the recent discussions on those matters.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 503.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received March 16.)

(No. 409. Confidential.)

My Lord,

Paris, March 15, 1861.

THERE can be no doubt that one of the principal reasons which has actuated the Imperial Government in desiring the prolonged occupation of Syria,

has been the apprehension of still more offending the Clerical party in France by an apparent abandonment of the protection of the Maronites.

I have found this idea more difficult than any other to combat in the frequent and long discussions which I have had with M. Thouvenel on this matter, and the argument which I have employed with the most success has been, that he might either in the debates in which the subject might be introduced, or through the press, insist that the presence of the naval squadrons on the coast of Syria would be sufficient to inspire confidence when it was wanting.

To-day, after the Conference was over, M. Thouvenel took me on one side and asked me whether I thought that Her Majesty's Government would be willing to enter into some agreement with regard to the presence of a combined squadron in the Syrian waters. I replied that I should write to your Lordship on the subject; and I have only to add that, as during these last two days I have found M. Thouvenel showing a conciliatory spirit, I should be very glad if Her Majesty's Government could return a favourable answer to his Excellency's inquiry.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

No. 504.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received March 16.)

(No. 410.)

My Lord,

Paris, March 15, 1861.

BEFORE going into Conference to-day, I requested M. Thouvenel to be very careful not to utter a word which would imply the possibility of a renewed demand hereafter for the further prolongation of the Syrian occupation; for, were a hint of the kind to be given by him, or any one else, I should be obliged, I said, to insist upon the execution of the Convention of September 5th.

M. Thouvenel said that, as far as he was concerned, I need be under no apprehension, for the Emperor was so resolved that the evacuation should be completed by the 5th of June that he (M. Thouvenel) had received orders to inform M. de Lavalette, General Beaufort, and M. Bécclard, that under no pretence could it be continued. Not being, however, certain that General Kisseleff would be as prudent, he took him on one side, and requested him to say nothing which might mar the amicable settlement by the Conference of this irritating question.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

No. 505.

Lord J. Russell to Earl Cowley.

(No. 333.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, March 16, 1861.

IN reply to your Excellency's despatch No. 409 of the 15th instant, I have to state to you that, in addition to the ships which have been on the coast of Syria during the winter, Her Majesty's Government have given orders for the preparation of a squadron to cruise on the coast on or about the 1st of May, and to remain there till the end of the summer.

As the object of Her Majesty's Government is the same as that of the French occupation, namely, to overawe those who might be inclined to repeat the massacres of last year, Her Majesty's Government will be happy to co-operate with the French Government for this purpose.

It would seem that the best course to be pursued will be, that Her Majesty's Government should draw up instructions for Admiral Mundy, who is to command the squadron, and communicate them to the French Government by a note from your Excellency, or a despatch from the Foreign Office.

You will speak to M. Thouvenel in this sense, and inform me of his reply.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

No. 506.

Acting Consul Wrench to Lord J. Russell.—(Received March 18.)

(No. 4.)

My Lord,

Damascus, February 25, 1861.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith copy of a despatch I have to-day addressed to his Excellency Sir Henry L. Bulwer, reporting on the events which have occurred in Damascus within the last few days.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WILLIAM H. WRENCH.

Inclosure in No. 506.

Acting Consul Wrench to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Damascus, February 25, 1861.

I HAVE the honour to report to your Excellency that Khaled Pasha, who had been for some weeks in the neighbourhood of the Hauran with about 800 troops, returned to Damascus rather unexpectedly on the 18th instant.

The report was spread that he had fled in such haste from a party of Druses as to abandon his dinner. The real facts of the case, as far as we can learn them at this distance, appear to be as follows:—

When Khaled Pasha, after an ineffectual attempt to recover the goats taken from the village of Kalat Jendal, moved to the neighbourhood of Shaara, on the borders of the Ledjah, the Druses, thinking his object was to attack them, assembled their co-religionists to a considerable number to oppose him. Khaled Pasha, not wishing probably to risk an engagement, returned with a part of his forces, leaving the remainder in those villages already occupied by Turkish troops.

The alarm occasioned by the report mentioned above was heightened by crosses being chalked, during the night, on the pavement in many places in the Meidan, in the same manner as immediately preceded the massacres of July. During the nights of last Friday and Saturday numerous crosses have been made on the pavements and doors of the Christian houses in the Meidan, and in the quarter of Kanawat. The authors have not been discovered, but three Christians, who were on a visit to a neighbour in the evening, on returning to their houses were arrested, and detained in prison for the night.

The Christians, in a great state of alarm, are disposing of their beds, copper, and whatever saleable articles they possess, in order to hire mules. Some have already left, but the majority wait to receive the arrears of the Government allowance, a portion of which will be paid in a few days hence.

Assaad Amer, a Druse in the employment of the Government, has been given an order for 150 horsemen, and leaves to-morrow for the Hauran.

Daas Agha Jerudi, who was a Chief in the Aunieh Irregular Horse, in prison since the middle of August last, when the Mushir made an expedition to Jerud, as reported to your Excellency in Mr. Brant's despatch No. 34 of the 16th August, 1860, and Emir Suleiman Harfoush, who was arrested in January 1859, and since that time has been confined in Damascus, effected their escape this morning. They were allowed to go to the bath, guarded by three men, and afterwards requested to be permitted to pray at the tomb of a Moslem saint. On their arrival at the burial-ground, about twenty horsemen, with two led-mares, awaited them. They mounted the animals, and rode off, the number of their followers preventing any opposition on the part of the guards.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WILLIAM H. WRENCH.

Lord Dufferin to Lord J. Russell.—(Received March 18.)

(No. 76.)

My Lord,

Beyrout, March 1, 1861.

I REGRET extremely that a press of business will prevent me giving your Lordship a detailed account of the proceedings of the Commission at our last two meetings. As, however, they will be resumed in a single Protocol, it will be almost more convenient that I should defer writing any commentary on what passed until that document is ready for transmission home. In the meantime it will be sufficient if I state that, at the official conferences which took place yesterday and the day before, under the presidency of Fuad Pasha, for the purpose of arriving at a final conclusion on the judgments proposed by the Extraordinary Tribunal at Beyrout, each of the Commissioners held pretty the same language as that which I have already attributed to them at the two preliminary and confidential meetings which took place at my house during the preceding week, as reported in my previous despatch No. 122 of the 24th ultimo.

M. Weckbecker confirmed the judgment of the Court (imprisonment) against Khorshid Pasha and Tahir Pasha; the other Turkish officials he acquitted altogether. Of the Druse Chiefs, he condemned two to death; demanded a commutation of the capital sentence on behalf of two others, and acquitted the remainder.

M. Bécclard and M. de Rehfués united in demanding the execution of all the five Turkish officials and all the eleven Druse Chiefs; a solitary exception being made in favour of an old man past 70, who they proposed should be only imprisoned for life.

M. Novikow declared himself in favour of a capital sentence being pronounced on Khorshid Pasha, Tahir Pasha, and Colonel Nouri Bey. The two other Turkish officials he thought ought to be condemned to death. Against some of the others, among whom was Said Bey Jumblatt, he also recorded sentence of death; but he was careful to add, that the evidence produced in Court against the latter prisoner was not alone sufficient to procure a conviction. With regard to the rest, he declined hazarding any opinion at all.

For the reasons mentioned in the Minute of which I have already forwarded your Lordship a copy, I felt myself compelled to unite with M. Bécclard, M. de Rehfués, and M. Novikow, in demanding the execution of the two Turkish Pashas; against Nouri Bey I also recommended sentence of death to be recorded, leaving it at the discretion of his Excellency subsequently to commute the penalty; and I confirmed the judgment of the Court in the case of the two subordinate officials. In conjunction with all my colleagues, I condemned two of the Druses to death; but I associated myself with M. Weckbecker in acquitting six of the others, and in requiring a commutation of the capital sentence passed on the remaining two.

His Excellency Fuad Pasha replied to our representations by a written paper, in which he defended the lenient sentences passed by his tribunal on the Turkish prisoners. In explanation of the capital punishment awarded without distinction to the Druses, his Excellency stated that the Penal Code having constituted death the penalty to be inflicted on any of the Sultan's subjects who should rise in insurrection against their fellow-countrymen, no other course was left open to the Court but to act in accordance with the requirements of the law.

A long debate ensued, which resulted in a declaration on the part of his Excellency that inasmuch as the Austrian Representative dissented from his colleagues, and that the invitation of the Commission was not unanimous, he could not take upon himself the responsibility of aggravating the sentence pronounced by the Court upon the two Pashas without a reference to Constantinople.

With regard to the Druse Chiefs in prison at Beyrout a still less conclusive decision was arrived at, every one maintaining his individual opinion with equal pertinacity. At last M. Weckbecker suggested that we should examine the minutes of evidence in concert. Though I am afraid this proceeding will merely waste time, without hastening a settlement of our differences, I did not decline accepting a proposition which seemed to receive the approval of my colleagues, and it has been arranged that we should hold daily meetings until the operation shall have been gone through with. By next mail the matter must be ended.

I will conclude by observing that I perceive an indication on the part of M. Bécclard to use the act of lenity he has been instructed by his Government to apply to the prisoners of Mokhtara as a means for procuring the conviction of all the Druse Chiefs at Beyrout. But it is contrary to justice that mercy should be bartered in this manner. The criminals at Mokhtara are, many of them, men of eminence and responsibility, whose guilt is infinitely greater than that of most of the Chiefs whom it is proposed to sentence to death. The latter are persons who gave themselves up to take their trial, and, consequently, it is to be presumed the least compromised of any of their nation. Many of them are not even accused of being implicated in the massacres. It seems, therefore, cruel to require them to be put to death in consideration of the act of grace it is proposed to extend to others more bloodstained than themselves.

Your Lordship, moreover, has been good enough to instruct me, by a telegram of the 5th ultimo, that the British and French Governments are of opinion that the execution of one or two Druse Chiefs or ringleaders guilty of murder will be sufficient.

Under these circumstances I shall consider it my duty to oppose the application of so irrevocable a penalty as that of death to any persons who do not come within the meaning of the phrase, at all events until I receive a reply to the despatch inclosing copy of the Minute I have had the honour of transmitting, for your Lordship's consideration, by last mail.

I have, &c.

(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

No. 508.

Lord Dufferin to M. Bécclard.

My dear Colleague,

Beyrout, March 1, 1861.

I WAS vexed yesterday to perceive that not only you misunderstood the expressions which fell from me at a certain period of the discussion, but that you quite misinterpreted the meaning I myself attached to them.

The first error I could correct on the spot; but it was necessary to reserve an explanation on the second until a more convenient opportunity.

What I said, or what I meant to say, was this—and it was in the hopes of conciliating the adverse opinions of yourself and M. de Rehfués that I said it—“Among the eleven Druse Chiefs condemned to death, there are six whose complicity in the massacres has not been proved, and who are, therefore, in my eyes, guilty of no greater crime than a participation in the ordinary hostilities of Mountain warfare. Under the circumstances, I do not think they are deserving either of death or of so severe a chastisement as imprisonment for life. It will be, therefore, my duty to oppose the application of either one or other of those penalties. A sentence of death I shall oppose à l'outrance, inasmuch as once executed it can never be rescinded. A sentence of perpetual imprisonment I shall also oppose, as unjust. Should I, however, be unable to persuade my colleagues to agree with me—should Fuad Pasha persist in pronouncing it, in spite of my remonstrances, I shall not weary the Commission by useless argument. I shall make my reserve, and report the matter to my Government, and it will be for them to make what representations they choose on a sentence recorded in opposition to the convictions of their Commissioner.”

Such was the substance of my observation, made, as you will remember, with the express promise that it was not to appear in the Protocol, for the simple reason that I should not wish to place on record the fact that even out of a sense of what was due to the convenience of my colleagues I had talked of yielding in any degree a single point which might appear to sanction an injustice.

Unfortunately, you fancied, somehow, that I contemplated calling on my Government to act independently of the Porte.

This notion was quite foreign to my thinking. At the time, I was thinking of the good understanding which seemed to prevail between our respective Governments on this odious subject of the executions. Already, they have conjointly interfered to temper a severity which we ourselves would not have felt authorized to mitigate. In the case of a difference of opinion arising between

their Representatives here, more especially when neither of those Representatives stand alone, it is to be expected that a similar agreement may be come to at head-quarters. When, therefore, I talked of the representations my Government might make, it was to M. Thouvenel that I contemplated their being addressed, and not to the Porte. Had you understood this, I am sure you would not have taken exception to what I said.

I regret extremely to differ from you. I can well understand it must be painful to you also to dispute on such a painful subject; but you may always rely on my being ready to acknowledge the temper and forbearance with which you are good enough to enter into the discussion.

Believe me, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

No. 509.

Lord J. Russell to Lord Dufferin.

(No. 74.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, March 18, 1861.

I HAVE received your Lordship's despatch No. 76 of the 1st instant, respecting the opinions and language of the Commissioners as to the sentences upon the Turkish and Druse prisoners.

Upon the whole Her Majesty's Government are disposed to agree with the Austrian Commissioner.

When a tribunal, pretty fairly chosen, has condemned the Turkish officials to a sentence short of death, it would be repugnant to our feelings to demand their execution in pursuance of the requisition of foreign agents who have not heard the evidence, and do not pretend to have examined the proofs of guilt in a judicial spirit. But if Khoorshid Pasha's life is spared his imprisonment ought to be rigorous, and not indulgent; it should be a reality, and should not be a mask for fresh confidence and future employment.

With regard to the Druses, if two of the most criminal, and who have been fully and satisfactorily proved to have been guilty of active participation in the massacres, are executed in pursuance of their sentence, it ought to be sufficient for the purposes of justice and of example. Her Majesty's Government could not give their consent to the execution of the six whom their Commissioner believes to be innocent of the massacres.

All the testimony we have received from Syria since the massacres tends to show that the Maronites had intended to be the aggressors, and had planned an attack upon the Druses, and Fuad Pasha ought, therefore, to ask the Porte to apply with great discrimination, and in a perfectly impartial spirit, the severe law which he quotes.

I must confess that I had understood the opinion of M. Thouvenel, which was applicable only to the Druses tried at Mokhtarah, as an opinion applicable also to the Druses tried at Beyrout. But in point of equity it would seem unjust to apply to Chiefs who had voluntarily surrendered a more severe measure of punishment than is applied to those who were forcibly taken prisoners.

It is said that Mr. Consul-General Moore induced the Druse Chiefs who surrendered at Beyrout to give themselves up, on the assurance that they should have a fair trial. If this is so, it increases our responsibility.

I send your Lordship a copy of a despatch from Lord Augustus Loftus, No. 73 of the 16th instant, in answer to the accompanying instruction which I addressed to him on receiving your Lordship's No. 122 to Sir Henry Bulwer.*

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

* Nos. 495 and 512.

No. 510.

Lord J. Russell to Lord Dufferin.

(No. 75.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, March 18, 1861.

HER Majesty's Government have had under their consideration your despatch No. 122 of the 24th ultimo, addressed to Sir Henry Bulwer; and I have to acquaint you that they approve of the course which you pursued in regard to the judgments proposed to be passed by the Extraordinary Tribunal at Beyrout on the Turkish and Druse prisoners.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 511.

Lord A. Loftus to Lord J. Russell.—(Received March 18.)

(No. 70.)

My Lord,

Berlin, March 16, 1861.

I HAVE not failed to communicate to Baron Schleinitz, as instructed by your Lordship's telegram of the 11th instant, the substance of your Lordship's telegraphic instruction of the 7th instant on the question of the prolonged occupation of Syria.

I informed his Excellency that the instructions from the Porte permitted the Turkish Ambassador at Paris to extend the period of the French occupation of Syria to the 5th of June next, if it were clearly stipulated that the evacuation shall have taken place at that time, and I further informed his Excellency that Earl Cowley was authorized to agree to that proposal if it were made clear, positive, and final.

Baron Schleinitz stated that he had learnt by telegraph from Paris that the question under discussion had been finally arranged, and that the new Convention would be signed in a few days.

He had not yet received a copy of the draft of Convention agreed upon, but he stated it to be on the basis to which I had referred.

I have, &c.
(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

No. 512.

Lord A. Loftus to Lord J. Russell.—(Received March 18.)

(No. 73.)

My Lord,

Berlin, March 16, 1861.

IN conformity with the instructions of your Lordship's despatch No. 35 of the 13th instant, I have brought under the notice of Baron Schleinitz the different opinions entertained by the European Commissioners in Syria, with reference to the sentences passed by the Tribunal at Beyrout on the Turkish and Druse prisoners for the massacre of the Christians last summer.

Baron Schleinitz did not admit that the Prussian Commissioner had taken so decided a part as that of desiring the indiscriminate execution of all the Druse prisoners under sentence at Beyrout; and his Excellency read to me a report from M. de Rehfuës, which certainly exculpated him from any such intention.

Baron Schleinitz further read to me a list of the different opinions offered on each case by the several Commissioners, according to which there did not appear to be so very marked a divergence of opinion between the English and the Prussian Commissioners, nor so perfect an agreement between the French and the Prussian Commissioners.

Baron Schleinitz further observed, that as yet the only official act which had taken place on this subject had been the collective note of the Commissioners to Fuad Pasha, which had been signed by all, with the exception of the Austrian Commissioner.

Baron Schleinitz said that he would, after perusal of the Minute of Lord Dufferin, which I had placed in his hands, determine on the instructions to be sent to the Prussian Commissioner. In the meantime his Excellency begged me to assure your Lordship that there was no desire on the part of the Prussian Government to recommend any extreme or unnecessary course of severity towards the unfortunate persons now under sentence of execution, but rather that the Prussian Commissioner, in the conscientious discharge of his duty, should act with as much leniency and moderation as justice, tempered with humanity, should admit of.

I have, &c.
(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

No. 513.

Lord Bloomfield to Lord J. Russell.—(Received March 18.)

(No. 100.)

My Lord,

Vienna, March 14, 1861.

THE French Ambassador has read to Count Rechberg some passages from a despatch of M. Thouvenel on the proposal that the occupation of Syria should be prolonged to the 5th of June, but M. de Moustier has not said that this date will be accepted by his Government as that on which the evacuation should be completed. On the contrary the object of the French despatch appears to have been simply to urge the Austrian Government to send instructions to Beyrout to close the labours of the Commission as soon as possible, leaving it to be understood that the French occupation was not to cease until the Commissioners were agreed as to their Report.

Count Rechberg observed to me that he most ardently wished this to be effected, but that he was of opinion the Commissioners would find much difficulty in coming to an agreement if they took a totally new basis for these negotiations, and that it would be more practical if they adopted as their starting-point the arrangement agreed to by the Powers in 1845.

I have, &c.
(Signed) BLOOMFIELD.

No. 514.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received March 18.)

(No. 416.)

My Lord

Paris, March 17, 1861.

I HAVE the honour to inclose two copies of the Protocol of the Conference on the affairs of Syria held in Paris on the 19th of February last.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

Inclosure in No. 514.

Protocol of a Conference held at Paris, February 19, 1861.

Présents :

Pour l'Autriche, M. le Prince de Metternich ;
Pour la France, M. Thouvenel ;
Pour la Grande Bretagne, M. le Comte Cowley ;
Pour la Prusse, M. le Comte de Pourtalès ;
Pour la Russie, M. le Comte de Kisseleff ;
Pour la Turquie, Vefik Effendi.

LE Plénipotentiaire de la France, en se référant à la communication de son Gouvernement qui a provoqué la réunion de la Conférence, rappelle et détermine

l'objet soumis à son examen, et il invite le Plénipotentiaire de la Turquie à faire connaître comment sa Cour envisage la situation des choses en Syrie, et l'exécution de la clause de la Convention du 5 Septembre qui fixe à six mois la durée du concours prêté par les troupes étrangères.

Le Plénipotentiaire de la Turquie expose que son Gouvernement s'est appliqué, dès l'origine, à remplir les devoirs que lui imposaient les événements dont la Syrie a été le théâtre, et qu'il s'est mis sans retard en mesure d'y pourvoir ; qu'il est en état de maintenir la tranquillité, et que la Convention peut recevoir son exécution sans danger pour la conservation de l'ordre. Il rend hommage d'ailleurs à l'attitude et à la conduite que les troupes Françaises et leurs Chefs ont tenues depuis leur débarquement.

Le Plénipotentiaire de la France remercie le Plénipotentiaire de la Turquie du témoignage qu'il rend à la Conférence de la manière dont le corps expéditionnaire a rempli sa tâche, mais il croit devoir déclarer que les informations parvenues à son Gouvernement le portent à penser que le départ des troupes Françaises serait suivi de nouveaux troubles. Il donne lecture de la correspondance des Agents Français, d'où il résulte que les populations se préparent à de nouvelles luttes, et que l'autorité locale ne dispose pas de moyens suffisants pour les contenir. Rapprochant cette situation de l'esprit de la Convention et des termes de l'Article V, il en conclut que le but que se proposaient les Puissances ne se trouverait pas rempli si les troupes Françaises évacuaient la Syrie en ce moment. Dans son opinion, on mettrait fin à la garantie matérielle stipulée par la Convention avant d'y avoir substitué la garantie morale que doit offrir l'organisation des pouvoirs publics qui ne peuvent être constitués sans que la Commission Internationale ait terminé ses travaux, et l'on sait que la Commission est loin de toucher au terme de son mandat. Il lui est donc impossible de partager la confiance que le Plénipotentiaire de la Turquie place dans les dispositions transitoires adoptées par son Gouvernement.

Le Plénipotentiaire de la Turquie ne saurait consentir à faire dépendre l'exécution de la Convention des mesures concernant le mode d'administration ; il n'oublie nullement dans quel esprit l'Acte du 5 Septembre a été conclu, et il ne voit dans la présence des troupes Françaises en Syrie qu'une manifestation des sympathies des Puissances alliées de la Porte, mais il ajoute qu'il n'est pas moins constant, d'autre part, que la Convention est formelle et qu'en ce qui regarde l'évacuation, elle stipule une date qu'on ne peut dépasser sans méconnaître la clause qui règle ce point essentiel ; qu'au surplus, l'œuvre de réorganisation de la Syrie revient exclusivement à son Gouvernement ; qu'on ne pourra y donner suite que quand la Commission aura accompli son mandat, et que, jusque là, il suffit, comme il l'affirme, que la Porte ait avisé aux moyens propres à assurer la sécurité. Il présume, du reste, que les Commissaires ont terminé leurs investigations sur les lieux, et la Conférence, selon lui, pourrait exprimer l'avis, afin de hâter le rétablissement d'un ordre de choses régulier en Syrie, que la Commission, dont la présence ou le rappel ne saurait modifier l'état matériel du pays, fût invitée à se rendre à Constantinople, où elle rédigerait son rapport, dont les Représentants des Puissances prendraient connaissance sans retard et pourraient ainsi, en se concertant avec la Porte, avancer le moment de la pacification.

Le Plénipotentiaire de la Russie, après avoir fait observer que les informations officielles parvenues à son Gouvernement lui permettent de partager les appréciations de M. le Plénipotentiaire de la France, ainsi que les conclusions qu'il en a déduites, relève que l'autorité n'est pas constituée en Syrie, et que, dans l'état de désordre où se trouve le pays, état qui n'offre pas les garanties désirables, les Agents de la Porte sont certainement dans l'impossibilité de prévenir de nouveaux conflits. A son avis, l'évacuation ne devrait avoir lieu que lorsqu'il serait bien constaté qu'elle pourrait s'effectuer sans qu'il en résulte de nouveaux dommages pour les populations Chrétiennes si cruellement éprouvées par les événements qui ont précédé et motivé l'intervention Européenne.

Le Plénipotentiaire de la France constate qu'il faut attribuer à des causes indépendantes de la volonté des Commissaires Européens les lenteurs qu'a subies la marche de leurs travaux, mais qu'il n'est pas moins vrai que leurs instructions, conformes à l'entente des Puissances, leur prescrivent d'assurer la punition des coupables, d'aviser aux moyens d'indemniser les victimes, et d'élaborer un rapport sur l'organisation administrative du Liban ; or, dit-il, jusqu'à présent, il n'a été infligé aucun châtiment aux auteurs des massacres de la Montagne, aucune

indemnité n'a été accordée aux Chrétiens, et la Commission n'est pas encore à même de présenter ses propositions de réorganisation. D'autre part, les Chefs Druses retirés dans le Hauran se concertent avec les Arabes et les Metualis pour résister ouvertement aux mesures de rigueur que l'on prendrait contre eux et poussent l'audace jusqu'à venir piller les villages situés aux portes de Damas ; les Chrétiens, de leur côté, se disposent à repousser les agressions dont ils sont menacés ; on s'arme partout et la guerre civile, loin d'être apaisée, est de nouveau imminente. En présence de ces éventualités, la France décline la responsabilité des conséquences qu'entraînerait le départ prématuré du corps expéditionnaire.

Le Plénipotentiaire de la Grande Bretagne répond que si l'on se plaçait au point de vue du Plénipotentiaire de la France, la Conférence devrait décider que l'occupation serait désormais permanente, et déclare que son Gouvernement n'adhérerait pas à une semblable résolution, qui est d'ailleurs déclinée par le Plénipotentiaire de la Puissance territoriale. Il annonce que les renseignements parvenus à son Gouvernement présentent la situation sous un jour qui le porte à considérer l'évacuation immédiate comme une mesure opportune et même nécessaire. Le Commissaire de la Grande Bretagne estime en effet que les Agents du Gouvernement Ottoman disposent des forces nécessaires au maintien de la tranquillité, et que la présence des troupes étrangères, utile au début, entretient aujourd'hui des espérances et des craintes dont l'effet est de perpétuer des ressentiments qu'il importe de faire cesser. Il soutient qu'il n'existe aucune connexité entre les travaux de la Commission et la durée de l'occupation ; que le but de la Convention est atteint ; que ce but a été défini dans le préambule de cet Acte, et consistait à "arrêter l'effusion du sang par des mesures promptes et efficaces ;" que les dispositions concertées par les Puissances ont réalisé l'objet unique qu'elles avaient en vue ; que la Convention peut donc et doit recevoir son exécution dans ses clauses finales. C'est désormais, pense-t-il, à la Puissance Souveraine qu'il appartient exclusivement de pourvoir à la sécurité en Syrie, et le Plénipotentiaire de la Turquie déclarant, avec raison selon lui, que son Gouvernement peut prévenir de nouveaux troubles, il n'y a nulle raison de retarder le départ des troupes, qui n'avaient d'autre mission que de concourir à mettre fin aux conflits sanglants qui avaient éclaté dans cette province.

Le Plénipotentiaire de la France fait remarquer qu'il ne s'agit nullement de combiner une occupation permanente, et que le Gouvernement Français, pour son compte, ne consentirait, en aucun cas, à en accepter seul les charges ; il reconnaît que s'il n'y a pas une connexité conventionnelle entre la mission des Commissaires et celle du corps expéditionnaire, cette connexité, dans son opinion, existe par la force des choses, puisque l'on s'exposerait à de nouveaux malheurs si l'on mettait fin à la garantie effective qui résulte de la présence des troupes étrangères, avant d'avoir pris et appliqué les dispositions que comporte l'exercice régulier et efficace de toute autorité.

Le Plénipotentiaire de la Grande Bretagne exprime l'avis que l'on pourrait seconder la Turquie dans l'œuvre de pacification qui reste à remplir et témoigner aux populations l'intention des Puissances de concourir, s'il y avait lieu, à la répression de nouveaux désordres, en décidant qu'on entretiendrait sur les côtes de Syrie une station combinée de leurs forces navales.

Le Plénipotentiaire de l'Autriche fait observer que cette mesure ne pourrait s'effectuer avant le mois de Mai, et qu'il pourrait surgir des conflits regrettables avant cette époque si le corps expéditionnaire quittait la Syrie à la date fixée par la Convention.

Le Plénipotentiaire de la Prusse émet la même opinion.

Le Plénipotentiaire de la Russie croit que la présence des bâtimens de guerre serait insuffisante pour garantir la sécurité des Chrétiens, qui, habitant le Liban et les grandes villes de l'intérieur, ne pourraient recevoir aucun secours des escadres, qui seraient forcées de borner leur protection aux villes du littoral.

Le Plénipotentiaire de la Grande Bretagne exprime la conviction que la présence des pavillons étrangers sur le littoral suffira par son influence morale pour contenir les mauvaises passions des habitants du Liban. Du reste, ajoute-t-il, rien ne serait plus facile que de débarquer une partie des équipages, s'il devenait nécessaire.

Le Plénipotentiaire de la Turquie dit qu'en principe il ne pourrait admettre aucune distinction entre l'occupation par des troupes de terre et le débarquement des équipages. Il revient au surplus sur ses déclarations antérieures et persiste

notamment à penser que l'état des choses en Syrie permet d'exécuter la Convention ; mais, connaissant les sentiments qui animent son Gouvernement, il croit que l'on pourrait régler le départ des troupes de manière que l'évacuation eût lieu sans exercer une influence fâcheuse sur les dispositions des esprits, en s'effectuant pendant un délai que la Porte utiliserait pour raffermir l'ordre. Il ne soumet à la Conférence aucune proposition ; mais il est prêt à tenir compte, dans cette mesure, des appréciations des autres Plénipotentiaires, et se croirait autorisé à transmettre à sa Cour une ouverture tendant à prolonger l'occupation temporairement et jusqu'à une date déterminée d'avance.

Le Plénipotentiaire de la France se plaint à reconnaître qu'une semblable suggestion tend à rapprocher les avis, mais il prévoit que l'on se trouvera, à l'expiration de ce délai, si l'on ne veut se préoccuper que d'une date, sans égard pour les circonstances, en face des mêmes difficultés et des mêmes dissensions. Il propose en conséquence de proroger l'occupation jusqu'au moment où la Porte pourra, avec les développements convenables, faire connaître à la Conférence, qui serait, sur sa demande, convoquée à cet effet, l'ensemble des mesures prises pour garantir la tranquillité de la Syrie, et les Plénipotentiaires décideraient alors, après avoir reçu cette communication, que l'évacuation aurait lieu. Il se fonde sur les appréciations du Gouvernement Britannique, qui a reconnu que, pour permettre aux Puissances de se prononcer en parfaite connaissance de cause, la Porte devait les informer des dispositions adoptées pour conjurer de nouveaux conflits.

Le Plénipotentiaire de la Grande Bretagne fait observer que son Gouvernement a acquis, postérieurement à cette communication, la conviction que la Porte s'était mise à même de maintenir l'ordre en Syrie. Il ajoute qu'il voit avec regret que, d'après les rapports des Agents Britanniques, de nombreux assassinats sont commis à l'heure qu'il est par les Maronites sur les Druses. Puisque la présence de troupes étrangères n'a pas pour effet de prévenir ces crimes, c'est là une raison de plus, selon lui, pour mettre une terme à l'occupation. Autrement, c'est sur l'Europe, qui a envoyé cette expédition, que retomberait la responsabilité de la non-punition de ces actes.

Le Plénipotentiaire de la France dit que les faits isolés signalés par M. le Plénipotentiaire de la Grande Bretagne ne sont pas parvenus à la connaissance du Gouvernement Français ; que, dans tous les cas, au lieu d'y voir un motif de hâter l'évacuation, il pense qu'on devrait en conclure qu'il est essentiel de prolonger l'occupation.

Le Plénipotentiaire de la Turquie déclare qu'il ne saurait accepter pour son Gouvernement l'obligation de justifier des moyens nécessaires au maintien de la sécurité sur son propre territoire.

Le Plénipotentiaire de la Russie propose de proroger l'évacuation de deux mois et de remettre toute résolution au terme de ce délai, époque à laquelle la Conférence serait mieux édifiée sur la situation des choses en Syrie ; selon lui, cet ajournement donnerait à la Commission le temps de terminer ses travaux et l'on trouverait vraisemblablement, dans le Rapport des Commissaires, les éléments d'une résolution qui réunirait l'assentiment de toutes les Puissances. Il ne s'opposerait pas au surplus à la suggestion faite par M. le Plénipotentiaire de la Turquie, s'il était entendu que, dans le cas où il surgirait de nouveaux incidents durant la prolongation de l'occupation, la Conférence pourrait modifier sa résolution selon les circonstances.

Le Plénipotentiaire de la Turquie fait savoir qu'il ne peut acquiescer à aucune proposition qui laisserait dépendre l'évacuation de faits éventuels, et, devant les termes explicites de la Convention, il maintient qu'elle doit avoir lieu à une date certaine.

La Conférence examine si l'on peut prévoir que, dans un délai déterminé, l'ordre moral sera suffisamment établi en Syrie pour qu'il soit possible, dès ce moment, de fixer à une date invariable le départ des troupes. A la suite de cette discussion, où se sont produits des avis contradictoires, le Plénipotentiaire de la Turquie a admis qu'il pourrait transmettre à sa Cour une proposition qui conduirait à signer une Convention prolongeant, pour tout délai, le terme de l'occupation jusqu'au 1 Mai prochain.

Les Plénipotentiaires décident qu'ils en référeront à leurs Cours respectives.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received March 19.)

(No. 421.)

My Lord,

Paris, March 18, 1861.

I STATED to M. Thouvenel this afternoon, in the terms of your Lordship's despatch No. 333 of the 16th instant, that it was the intention of Her Majesty's Government to reinforce towards the 1st of May Her Majesty's naval squadron on the coast of Syria; and that Her Majesty's Government would be ready to communicate to the French Government the instructions to be furnished to Admiral Mundy.

M. Thouvenel replied, that the Imperial squadron would be stationed on the Syrian coast about the same time, and that he thought it would be better to defer until a little later the settlement of the instructions to be given to the Commanders-in-chief.

His Excellency added, that he had this morning received intelligence from Beyrout up to the 1st instant, and that it was very unsatisfactory; but I could not elicit from him any statement of facts, nor do I believe that the reports to which he alludes contain more than a general and vague repetition of the apprehensions entertained by the Christian population with regard to the future.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

No. 516.

Lord J. Russell to Earl Cowley.

(No. 344.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, March 19, 1861.

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 421 of the 18th instant, reporting your communications with M. Thouvenel respecting the intention of Her Majesty's Government to reinforce the British squadron on the coast of Syria, as referred to in my despatch No. 333 of the 16th instant.

The instructions to the British Admiral to which I have alluded will be prepared, and will be transmitted to Paris at the end of this month.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 517.

Earl Cowley to Lord J. Russell.—(Received March 20.)

(No. 431.)

My Lord,

Paris, March 19, 1861.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith two copies of the Protocol of Conference on Syrian affairs held on the 15th instant.

I have, &c.
(Signed) COWLEY.

Inclosure in No. 517.

Protocol of a Conference held at Paris, March 15, 1861.

Présents :

Pour l'Autriche, M. le Prince de Metternich;
Pour la France, M. Thouvenel;
Pour la Grande Bretagne, M. le Comte Cowley;
Pour la Prusse, M. le Comte de Pourtalès;
Pour la Russie, M. le Comte de Kisseleff;
Pour la Turquie, Vefik Effendi.

LE Protocole de la séance du 19 Février est lu et adopté avec des amendements qui ne donnent lieu à aucune discussion.

Le Plénipotentiaire de la France exprime le vœu que les Plénipotentiaires fassent connaître l'avis de leurs Gouvernements respectifs sur la suggestion qu'on était convenu de soumettre à leur appréciation.

Le Plénipotentiaire de l'Autriche dit que depuis la dernière réunion de la Conférence, il s'est écoulé un temps assez long pour qu'il lui semble désirable de fixer à trois mois le terme pendant lequel on prorogerait l'occupation Européenne en Syrie; il lui semble que, pendant ce délai, la Porte pourrait prendre les mesures complémentaires que l'on jugerait opportunes pour dissiper toutes les inquiétudes, et préparer ainsi l'évacuation de manière à prévenir les conflits qui, selon certaines prévisions, menaceraient d'éclater après le départ des troupes étrangères.

Le Plénipotentiaire de la France fait savoir qu'il a soumis à l'appréciation de son Gouvernement la combinaison proposée à la Conférence dans sa précédente réunion, et qu'elle ne lui a pas paru répondre aux éventualités dont il y a lieu de tenir compte; il reconnaît cependant que si l'occupation était prolongée pendant trois mois, on aurait du moins une plus grande latitude pour y aviser.

Le Plénipotentiaire de la Grande Bretagne déclare que son Gouvernement n'a reçu aucune information qui puisse le porter à modifier la manière de voir dont il a fait part à la Conférence; qu'il doit donc persister dans l'opinion qu'il a exprimée; mais que si les autres Plénipotentiaires sont disposés à ajourner le départ des troupes étrangères, il est lui-même autorisé, dans un esprit de conciliation, à y donner son assentiment pourvu que le délai n'excède pas le terme de trois mois, et que la Sublime Porte n'y fasse point d'objection.

Le Plénipotentiaire de la Prusse est d'avis d'adopter cette prolongation: selon lui, la Commission pourrait terminer ses travaux durant cette période, et le départ des troupes coïncidant ainsi avec la nouvelle organisation de l'administration du Liban, on posséderait une garantie de plus pour le maintien de la tranquillité.

Le Plénipotentiaire de la Russie adhère pour sa part à cette prolongation, qui, à son sens, répond à une mesure d'urgence recommandée aux Grandes Puissances par l'humanité aussi bien que par les intérêts généraux de l'Europe et de la Turquie. Elle permettra d'ailleurs de mener à bonne fin les mesures d'ordre et d'organisation nécessitées par la situation du Liban et conformes aux vœux de son Gouvernement.

Le Plénipotentiaire de la Turquie annonce qu'il a soumis à sa Cour la suggestion consignée dans le Protocole de la précédente réunion; que sa Cour l'a chargé de maintenir les déclarations qu'il a faites en ce qui concerne les moyens dont elle dispose pour préserver la tranquillité en Syrie, comme pour ce qui touche l'organisation administrative et les travaux de la Commission; que cependant, dans un sentiment de gratitude pour le concours que l'Europe lui a prêté, elle l'avait autorisé à consentir à une prolongation de l'occupation jusqu'au 30 Mai; que l'esprit dans lequel sont conçues ces instructions lui permet d'acquiescer, puisque tous les Plénipotentiaires y adhèrent, au terme de trois mois: si cette clause est combinée de manière à fixer exactement la date de l'évacuation.

Le Plénipotentiaire de la Grande Bretagne croit pouvoir, après avoir entendu les autres Plénipotentiaires, proposer à la Conférence une rédaction qui lui paraît conforme aux vues conciliantes des Puissances, et il en donne lecture.

Cette rédaction est examinée par la Conférence, qui, après en avoir discuté les termes, tombe d'accord sur le libellé de l'Acte annexé au présent Protocole, et qui reçoit la signature des Plénipotentiaires.

Fait à Paris, le quinze Mars, mil huit cent soixante-et-un.

Annex.

LEURS Majestés l'Empereur d'Autriche, l'Empereur des Français, la Reine du Royaume Uni de la Grande Bretagne et d'Irlande, le Roi de Prusse, l'Empereur de toutes les Russies, et l'Empereur des Ottomans, après les explications échangées entre leurs Gouvernements respectifs, s'étant entendus pour modifier la Convention conclue entre eux le 5 Septembre dernier, les Représentants de leurs dites Majestés sont tombés d'accord sur les Articles suivants, qui seront textuellement

convertis en une Convention dont les instruments vont être aussitôt préparés pour être revêtus de leurs signatures :—

ARTICLE I.

La durée de l'occupation Européenne en Syrie sera prolongée jusqu'au 5 Juin de la présente année, époque à laquelle il est entendu entre les Hautes Parties Contractantes qu'elle aura atteint son terme, et que l'évacuation aura été effectuée.

ARTICLE II.

Les stipulations contenues dans l'Article II de la Convention du 5 Septembre, 1860, en tant qu'elles n'ont point encore été exécutées, ou qu'elles ne sont pas modifiées par la présente Convention, demeureront en vigueur pendant la période qui s'écoulera entre la date de la signature de cet Acte, et le 5 Juin de l'année courante.

ARTICLE III.

La présente Convention sera ratifiée, et les ratifications en seront échangées à Paris dans le délai de cinq semaines, ou plus tôt si faire se peut.

Les Plénipotentiaires sont convenus de se réunir Mardi prochain, 19, pour signer la Convention.

Paris, le 15 Mars, 1861.

No. 518.

Sir H. Bulwer to Lord J. Russell.—(Received March 20.)

(No. 172.)

My Lord,

Constantinople, March 7, 1861.

I HAVE not failed, in accordance with the instructions contained in your Lordship's telegram of the 2nd instant, to urge the Porte not to permit the execution of the Druse Chief Said Bey Djumlat, and I have now much satisfaction in acquainting your Lordship that Aali Pasha wrote yesterday to Fuad Pasha to desire his Excellency to comply with the wishes of Her Majesty's Government in this matter.

I have already telegraphed, by way of Smyrna, in the above sense to Lord Dufferin.

I have, &c.

(Signed) HENRY L. BULWER.

No. 519.

Lord Napier to Lord J. Russell.—(Received March 23.)

(No. 4.)

My Lord,

St. Petersburg, March 13, 1861.

IN my conversation with Prince Gortchakoff yesterday, his Excellency touched upon the question of the French occupation in Syria. He disclaimed being an exclusive partisan of France: in that respect he had been exposed to erroneous imputations. He often differed with France, and even on this very matter, the settlement of the Lebanon, he found himself nearer the views of the English than those of the French Commissioner. In reference to the military occupation of Syria by the French forces he, however, entertained no jealousy. France was the delegate of Europe. Other Powers might have taken an active part and sent their troops. They had preferred not to do so. The honour of Europe was involved in the pacification of Syria and the reorganization of its Government. His accounts led him to believe that the country was not definitively tranquillized. He could not approve of a premature removal of European control, or contemplate with indifference the renewal of the late excesses.

On my asking Prince Gortchakoff, distinctly, what term he placed to the French occupation, he replied that they ought to remain until the country was completely pacified, until the foreign Commissioners had framed their scheme of

future government for the Lebanon, and until that scheme had been accepted by the Porte, and was actually in the first stage of execution. He did not care to fix any positive date. The 1st of July had been spoken of. He trusted the objects alluded to above might be attained by that day, but he would insist on no day. The duration of the French occupation should be measured by its necessity, by its results.

I remarked to the Prince, that acting on this principle, he made the French the judges of the duration of their stay, for they might prolong discussion and defer resolution as much as they pleased; I regretted that his Excellency had adopted this view, for I believed it would not be accepted by your Lordship or by public feeling in England. I also contested the necessity of a prolongation, basing myself on the opinion of Lord Dufferin conveyed to Her Majesty's Government, and on the general reflection that the disorders in Syria were neither caused by the tyranny of the Porte or its weakness, but originated in local animosities, and were continued by the wilful and culpable inaction of the Turkish Commanders, who, if they had pleased, might have mitigated the contest in the Lebanon, and prevented the outbreak at Damascus altogether. The Turks were strong enough to keep order if they pleased, and it was now their obvious policy to do so.

The Prince expressed his personal sympathies for Lord Dufferin and his admiration for his Lordship's conduct in Syria, but contended that Lord Dufferin might be mistaken, and that his single opinion could not outweigh the opinions of all the other Commissioners, who considered that foreign intervention could not yet be dispensed with. He also remarked that the French had no desire to remain longer than was necessary; of that I might be perfectly persuaded. M. de Montebello had even hinted to him the inclination of his Government to retire, but he would not take the hint. The French desired to draw in all their scattered troops from China, Cochin China, and Syria, perhaps with a view to other objects.

Respecting the eventual government of the Mountain, Prince Gortchakoff stated that he entertained no very defined opinion. So many local interests and details were involved that he left the question to be debated and settled by the Commissioners. The last project, involving a single Christian Governor for the whole Mountain, named by the Porte, and unconnected with the place, with a Mixed Council and Communal Institutions conformable to the religion of the several separate districts and villages, seemed to him to be, on a cursory view, a reasonable one.

The Prince then procured M. Novikow's last Reports, under date of February 10th, o.s., forwarding the draft of a Plan of Government designed by the Commissioners, and accompanied by their several reservations.

In M. Novikow's Reports I remarked a greater inclination to the views of his English colleague than for those of France. He emphatically declines the suggestion of a Christian Governor selected from the house of Shehab as incompatible with an impartial Government, with the interests of the Greek inhabitants, and with the abrogation of feudal privileges.

On the question of French occupation generally, the Prince spoke almost with enthusiasm. He seemed to be more a partisan of that occupation than the French themselves.

I have, &c.

(Signed) NAPIER.

No. 520.

Lord Dufferin to Lord J. Russell.—(Received March 26.)

(No. 77.)

My Lord,

Beyrout, March 4, 1861.

FROM a despatch, No. 206 of the 17th ultimo, addressed by his Excellency Lord Cowley to your Lordship, it would appear that M. Béclard has informed M. Thouvenel that the Commissioners had unanimously required his Excellency Fuad Pasha to add largely to the list of twenty persons already condemned to death by the Court-martial of Mokhtara; and that M. Thouvenel

having expressed his dissatisfaction at such "a holocaust," has suggested the propriety of restricting the number of executions to one or two of the principal criminals.

How far M. Bécclard was justified in making the statement ascribed to him by his Chief is rendered evident by the inclosed Protocol of the twenty-first sitting of the Commission; and I confess it would be a great satisfaction to me if Lord Cowley would kindly draw M. Thouvenel's attention to the great discrepancy which would seem to exist between M. Bécclard's account of our proceedings and that recorded in this document.

What happened was simply this:—

On the 24th of January, Abro Efendi announced to us, on the part of Fuad Pasha, that in consequence of the Christians having refused to give evidence, the Tribunal at Mokhtara had been able to satisfy themselves of the guilt of only 20 out of the 290 persons specially accused of murder, but that if the Commission would authorize him to do so, his Excellency was anxious to join to this number the twenty-three Chiefs and others already proposed to be condemned by the Extraordinary Tribunal of Beyrout, in all, forty-three persons, whom he would at once proceed to execute.

To this proposal the French Commissioner professed himself anxious to assent, provided that more names were added to the list of those already sentenced at Mokhtara, and he indicated the number eighty as a maximum.

To any proceeding of this kind I felt it my duty to offer the most strenuous opposition. As for including the Chiefs imprisoned at Beyrout in the same category with the blood-stained assassins convicted at Mokhtara, it was out of the question. Most of them were not even accused of participation in the massacres. The *procès-verbal* of their trials had not been yet communicated to us, and the Commission had not ratified the sentences proposed to be passed upon them. They must still, therefore, be considered as uncondemned.

As to inviting the Court-martial in the Mountain to add to the list of twenty they had already sent in, it was a very dangerous expedient. It might, indeed, be urged that twenty convictions for murder bore a very small proportion to the thousands of Christians who had been butchered; but though out of deference to my colleagues I might make this admission in the abstract, it seemed to me a horrible thing to tempt such a Tribunal as that on which we had to depend to force their consciences, and condemn persons on what would prove insufficient evidence.

In reference to the twenty already sentenced I had no scruples. A British officer had been invited by his Excellency Fuad Pasha to watch the proceedings of the Court, and he reported himself satisfied with the guilt of those who had been designated to us. Should he in the meantime have ascertained that substantial proof was forthcoming against some of the others, I should not refuse on his authority to add their names to the list, but that beyond this I could not go.

In consequence of my objections to allow the Druse Chiefs to be thus summarily dealt with, as well as on account of the ambiguous nature of the Commission's reply to his demands, Fuad Pasha returned to Beyrout for the purpose of conferring with us in person on the subject.

The inclosed is a copy of the Protocol of the meeting which followed, and I think your Lordship will perceive that M. Bécclard must have strangely misunderstood my meaning, if he represented me as desiring to multiply the number of executions in the Mountain.

The discussion to which I refer took place more than a month ago. Since then, it is to be presumed by M. Thouvenel's language that his Commissioner must have received instructions not to insist on anything approaching to a "holocaust," as the French Minister designated the proposed execution of twenty condemned murderers. Yet only the day before yesterday M. Bécclard urged upon his Excellency Fuad Pasha, in the most energetic manner, the immediate putting to death of no less than fifteen persons, viz., five Turkish officials and ten Druse Chiefs, notwithstanding that a majority of his colleagues as strongly advocated a milder sentence on two-thirds of that number, and that two of them, M. Weckbecker and myself, contended for the absolute acquittal of six.

I have, &c.

(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure in No. 520.

Protocol of the Twenty-first Meeting of the Syrian Commission, held at Beyrout, January 29, 1861.

Le vingt-neuf Janvier, mil huit cent soixante-un, tous les Commissaires étant réunis à Beyrout sous la présidence de Fuad Pacha, la séance est ouverte à deux heures et demie.

Il est convenu que les procès-verbaux des deux précédentes séances, auxquelles Abro Efendi a pris part, en qualité de Délégué du Commissaire Ottoman, seront lus et adoptés dans une réunion particulière à laquelle Abro Efendi sera prié d'assister.

Fuad Pacha expose à la Commission qu'après avoir reçu son avis sur les condamnations du Tribunal de Mokhtarah, il a fait élargir les détenus de la seconde catégorie, et n'a retenu en prison que les 290 individus compris dans la première. Il a cru devoir en outre ajourner l'exécution des condamnations déjà prononcées, afin que toutes puissent s'exécuter simultanément. Ces résolutions une fois prises, Fuad Pacha est revenu à Beyrout pour s'entendre de nouveau avec la Commission. L'avis, formulé par elle dans la précédente séance, pourrait être, selon lui, le résultat d'un malentendu, et il pense qu'en réalité le chiffre total des condamnations qu'il a projeté de prononcer contre les Druses, tant à Beyrout qu'à Mokhtarah, est de nature à remplir le vœu de la Commission. En effet, si l'on ajoute au chiffre des vingt condamnations proposées par le Tribunal de Mokhtarah, celui des vingt-trois condamnations proposées par le Tribunal de Beyrout, savoir, onze contre les individus dont les dossiers ont déjà été transmis à la Commission, six contre les contumaces récemment arrêtés, et six autres dont les dossiers seront prochainement communiqués, on arrive à un total de quarante-trois condamnations contre les Druses, c'est-à-dire, à un chiffre approchant celui des condamnations de Damas que la Commission ne veut pas dépasser, et d'autre part très-supérieur à celui de vingt qu'elle considère comme insuffisant au point de vue politique. Fuad Pacha provoque à ce sujet de nouvelles explications de la part de la Commission, et son Excellence termine, en déclarant que son intention, conforme au deuxième avis exprimé par la Commission, est d'appliquer une peine de second ordre à ceux d'entre les 290 détenus de Mokhtarah qui ne seront point condamnés à la peine de mort.

M. de Rehues s'attache à démontrer qu'il n'y a eu, de la part de la Commission, aucune espèce de malentendu. La Commission n'ignorait nullement que le Tribunal de Beyrout eût proposé déjà la condamnation de vingt-trois Chefs Druses, puisque les sentences prononcées contre ces Chefs ont été soumises à son appréciation, et qu'il en était fait mention dans la lettre même par laquelle Fuad Pacha demandait l'avis de la Commission relativement aux sentences du Tribunal de Mokhtarah. C'est par rapport à cette seconde catégorie de sentences, et abstraction faite de celles prononcées à Beyrout, que la Commission avait à donner son avis; elle a distingué dans cet avis ce que par la nature même des choses devait être distingué. A Beyrout sont détenus les Chefs de la nation Druse, ceux que leur haute responsabilité commande de frapper. A Mokhtarah se trouvent ou devraient du moins se trouver les agents secondaires qui ont commis les 6,000 assassinats de la Montagne. C'est de ces derniers seulement qu'il était question, et au sujet desquels la Commission avait à se prononcer, et l'expression de son avis n'est certainement point le résultat d'un malentendu.

Lord Dufferin rappelle que la Commission a été unanime à reconnaître avec lui que le chiffre des condamnations à prononcer dans la Montagne ne devait pas dépasser celui des condamnations exécutées à Damas. La raison, dit-il, en est évidente. A Damas les meurtres ont été aussi nombreux que dans la Montagne, et ils n'avaient point été provoqués, tandis que dans la Montagne il devient chaque jour plus clair que les Druses ont été provoqués d'une manière arrêtée d'avance, et que presque partout ce sont les Chrétiens qui ont commencé l'attaque. Jusqu'à présent M. le Commissaire Britannique avait hésité à se prononcer sur ce dernier point d'une façon trop catégorique, mais il ne craint pas aujourd'hui d'affirmer que les Druses ont pris les armes pour se défendre, et qu'à moins d'être des lâches ils devaient le faire. Ceci posé et le châtimement des atrocités dont ils se sont malheureusement rendus coupables pendant la lutte étant admis en principe, il est évident que dans sa mesure ce châtimement ne doit

pas être aussi rigoureux que celui des Damasquins, qui ont commis autant de meurtres et autant d'atrocités, sans y avoir été provoqués par les Chrétiens. M. le Commissaire Britannique est d'avis que, dans la balance des deux répressions, il faut faire entrer en ligne de compte toutes les condamnations, aussi bien celles de Beyrouth que celles de Mokhtarah. Il a toujours cru, et les réserves qu'il a faites à ce sujet sont là pour le prouver, que si le chiffre de vingt condamnations prononcées à Mokhtarah ne semblait pas de nature à remplir l'objet qu'on se proposait, cependant il n'appartenait pas à la Commission d'engager un Tribunal à frapper de mort, dans un but purement politique, des individus dont la culpabilité ne serait pas démontrée.

Si en principe, et ainsi qu'il a été admis, la répression des Druses ne doit pas égaler celle infligée aux Damasquins, il semble maintenant à Lord Dufferin que cette répression pourrait sans inconvénient être de beaucoup moins rigoureuse, vu d'une part les souffrances endurées par la nation Druse toute entière, vu d'autre part le grand nombre de meurtres isolés qui ont été commis par les Chrétiens sur les Druses depuis les événements. M. le Commissaire Britannique s'engage à communiquer à ses collègues une liste nominale de 136 hommes, 25 femmes et 15 enfants tués, 63 hommes et 22 femmes blessés, par les Chrétiens. Il rappelle la lettre adressée par lui à Fuad Pacha, lorsqu'arriva la première nouvelle de ces représailles, lettre dont il avait fait connaître le contenu au Général Commandant-en-chef du corps expéditionnaire, et dans laquelle il exprimait l'opinion que, si tout d'abord un exemple n'était pas fait et la tendance des Chrétiens à se rendre justice eux-mêmes n'était pas réprimée dès le début, ces assassinats se multiplieraient. C'est là malheureusement, ajoute Lord Dufferin, ce qui est arrivé, et dans un tel état de choses, eu égard aux circonstances qui ont précédé, comme à celles qui ont suivi la lutte, il est difficile de reconnaître aux Chrétiens le droit d'exiger que les Druses soient frappés d'un châtiment très rigoureux.

Le Commissaire Français, en réponse au discours de Lord Dufferin, fait observer que, si le Commissaire de Sa Majesté Britannique a pu décliner à bon droit la responsabilité des assassinats commis par des Chrétiens, cette responsabilité, Dieu merci, ne retombe sur aucun des autres membres de la Commission. Ce n'est pas à eux en effet qu'on peut reprocher le retard apporté au châtiment des Druses. Si des assassinats ont été commis, qu'on en recherche les auteurs, mais qu'on ne confonde pas quelques actes de vengeance, accomplis par des Chrétiens égarés, pour qui la répression promise a été trop lente à venir, avec l'œuvre de justice que la Commission poursuit de ses vœux.

Quant au chiffre des condamnations capitales auquel le Tribunal Extraordinaire de Mokhtarah s'était provisoirement arrêté, et que la Commission a déclaré insuffisant, M. Bédard ne pense pas non plus qu'il ait pu donner lieu à un malentendu. La Commission savait en effet, et le Plénipotentiaire Ottoman lui avait fourni à cet égard toutes les explications désirables, que les onze jugements déjà rendus à Beyrouth contre des Chefs Druses concluaient à la peine de mort; que six contumaces condamnés à la même peine venaient d'être saisis, et que les dossiers relatifs à six autres procès criminels également terminés par des condamnations capitales allaient être bientôt soumis à son examen.

Pour atténuer apparemment la culpabilité des Druses et pour leur concilier une indulgence à laquelle ils n'ont aucun droit, on parle aussi de la provocation dont ils auraient été l'objet de la part des Chrétiens. M. Bédard considère cette allégation comme étant tout au moins imprudente. Aucune preuve ne vient la corroborer, tandis que la dévastation, le pillage, et la ruine des villages Chrétiens, tandis que le sang de tant de milliers de victimes, parlent assez haut contre les Druses. Il serait difficile aujourd'hui, si l'on se reporte aux assassinats isolés qui de part et d'autre ont précédé les événements de la Montagne, de dire quels ont été les premiers agresseurs. Cette recherche n'aurait d'ailleurs aucun intérêt; c'est une question de date et rien de plus. Mais ce qui malheureusement est à l'abri de toute contestation, c'est la partialité, pour ne pas dire la connivance, des autorités Ottomanes. Leur protection s'est-elle jamais exercée au profit des Chrétiens? Quand les soldats Ottomans sont intervenus dans la lutte, est-ce pour aider les Chrétiens à égorger et à piller leurs adversaires? On a parlé de provocation. A qui cette provocation a-t-elle été en quelque sorte adressée, lorsque la Montagne, dépossédée de son administration unique et Chrétienne, s'est vue soumise au régime des Caïmacamies? Prétend-on aussi prouver que les massacres de 1842 et 1845 ont été provoqués par les

Chrétiens? Toujours victimes de la fureur des Druses, ne faut-il voir en eux que des provocateurs et par conséquent des coupables? Leurs malheurs seuls sont prouvés, ainsi que leur résignation. Et si cette résignation leur eût manqué, pourrait-on bien leur imputer à crime d'avoir aspiré à la délivrance? On sait dans tous les cas ce qu'ils ont obtenu. En demandant justice pour les Chrétiens, en indiquant la proportion dans laquelle cette justice devait s'exercer, la Commission a fait tout ce qu'elle pouvait faire. Un plus long débat devient inutile; c'est à l'autorité compétente qu'il appartient d'agir et de satisfaire à de légitimes exigences.

Fuad Pacha ne croit pas pouvoir laisser sans réponse deux idées qui viennent d'être émises par M. Bédard. De l'avis de son Excellence, la séparation de la Montagne en deux Caïmacamies, mesure purement administrative, ne saurait être considérée comme une provocation à l'adresse des Chrétiens. En second lieu, si les agents de l'autorité ont à la vérité dans ces derniers temps mal rempli leurs devoirs, on ne peut en induire que le Gouvernement a toujours favorisé les Druses et retiré sa protection aux Chrétiens.

M. le Commissaire de Russie est d'avis que, pour arriver à une solution pratique de la question, il n'est pas nécessaire de remonter si haut que viennent de le faire ses collègues de France et d'Angleterre. Il n'y a de guerre civile que là où l'on se bat des deux côtés. Or, malheureusement les Chrétiens ne se sont point battus, et bien loin d'avoir été provocateurs, notamment à Hasbeya, Racheya, et Deir-el-Kamar, ils se sont laissés massacrer presque sans résistance. Les assassinats, ou pour mieux dire les représailles individuelles auxquelles ils se sont livrés depuis les événements, fussent-ils au nombre de 150, ne sont point une satisfaction pour la justice. On ne peut même sans inconvénient les faire entrer en ligne de compte, car un tel calcul conduirait à dire que, sur les 6,000 meurtres commis par les Druses, 5,850 restent sans vengeance.

M. Novikow ne croit pas qu'il y ait d'ailleurs lieu de s'appesantir sur le caractère et les conséquences de la décision administrative adoptée en 1842, mesure qui appartient à une phase historique, placée en dehors des attributions de la Commission. Le principe sur lequel la Commission est déjà tombée d'accord, et d'où elle peut tirer une solution pratique de la question pendante, c'est que le nombre des condamnations à mort dans la Montagne ne dépassera pas celui des condamnations prononcées à Damas. Or, que l'on prenne le chiffre de vingt proposé par le Tribunal de Mokhtarah, ou celui de trente à quarante, en y ajoutant les condamnations proposées par celui de Beyrouth, il y a toujours de la marge, puisqu'il y a eu quatre-vingt exécutions à Damas, et de quelque manière qu'il entende le vœu exprimé par la Commission, le Commissaire du Sultan, s'il veut y déférer, doit encore étendre les limites de la répression. Afin pourtant de ne point leur donner une extension trop considérable et pour éviter une trop grande effusion de sang, M. Novikow rappelle qu'il a proposé dans la dernière séance l'application d'une peine secondaire, telle que la déportation, à ceux d'entre les détenus de Mokhtarah qui ne seraient point condamnés à mort, et qui cependant méritaient d'être punis. La Commission s'est unanimement ralliée à cette proposition. En conséquence M. le Commissaire Russe est d'avis que la Commission n'a rien à ajouter aux conclusions qu'elle a déjà prises et qui ont été communiquées à son Excellence.

M. de Weckbecker rappelle que la question avait été posée dans les termes suivants :—

Vingt condamnations à mort sont-elles suffisantes au point de vue politique? A cette question la Commission a répondu à l'unanimité négativement. En faisant cette réponse, elle a dû nécessairement supposer que le Tribunal de Mokhtarah avait à sa disposition les moyens de constater le degré de culpabilité des prévenus placés sous sa juridiction.

Fuad Pacha revient à ce propos sur les difficultés de toutes sortes qui ont entravé, et parfois même rendu complètement stériles, les recherches de la justice. A défaut de preuves, il a fallu dans la plupart des cas se contenter d'une simple présomption de culpabilité. Si en théorie il est facile de dire que vingt condamnations ne suffisent pas, il est difficile dans la pratique de recueillir des témoignages sur lesquels pourrait s'appuyer un plus grand nombre de condamnations.

Ce que Lord Dufferin redoute par dessus tout, c'est que, pour produire un effet purement politique, on ne frappe des innocents. A ses yeux l'intérêt de la justice passe avant celui de la politique. Peu lui importe au fond le nombre des

condamnés, pourvu que ce soient des coupables, et que leur crime soit démontré. Si on lui présentait une liste de cent ou cent cinquante Druses dont la culpabilité serait prouvée par des témoignages bien positifs, il serait le premier à approuver et même à réclamer leur condamnation à mort, sinon leur exécution.

M. Bécclard n'admet pas qu'après de tels événements la justice sociale puisse être frappée d'une sorte d'impuissance. Il s'étonne d'entendre ceux qui sont chargés de punir, et ceux qui ont mission de provoquer la répression, arguer sans cesse du défaut de preuves et de témoignages. Il se peut que les témoignages oculaires fassent souvent défaut, et cela n'a rien que de naturel, puisque les Druses ont massacré impitoyablement tout ce qui n'avait pas fui. Mais dans une telle conjoncture, et quand 6,000 cadavres témoignent d'eux-mêmes, quand il s'agit de rendre, ainsi que la Commission l'a reconnu, une justice prompte et expéditive, le devoir des tribunaux est de se plier aux circonstances et de condamner sur d'autres preuves que celles requises en temps ordinaires.

M. de Weekbecker est d'avis qu'en pareil cas la dénonciation, la voix publique peuvent servir d'indication à la justice.

Fuad Pacha met fin à cet entretien, en déclarant que le principe de la simultanéité des exécutions étant adopté, et la Commission n'ayant pas encore donné son avis sur les condamnations proposées par le Tribunal de Beyrouth, il s'écoulera encore quelque temps d'ici à ce que la répression soit définitivement arrêtée. Il tâchera de mettre ce temps à profit pour recueillir de nouvelles indications sur la culpabilité des 290 individus détenus à Mokhtara. Ces recherches lui permettront peut-être d'augmenter le chiffre des condamnations à mort, et alors une fois l'avis de la Commission, relatif aux sentences du Tribunal de Beyrouth, à lui transmis, il fera procéder simultanément et immédiatement aux exécutions.

M. Bécclard saisit l'occasion qui s'offre à lui pour demander à Fuad Pacha s'il a enfin reçu de Constantinople des instructions relatives à l'indemnité des Chrétiens de Damas, affaire déjà examinée depuis trois mois par la Commission.

Le Commissaire Ottoman répond qu'il n'a pas encore reçu de réponse aux demandes pressantes qu'il a adressées à ce sujet à son Gouvernement, mais qu'il ne désespère pas d'en recevoir prochainement.

Lord Dufferin est d'avis que le retard mis par la Porte au règlement de cette question est de sa part une très-grave faute.

M. le Commissaire Français donne connaissance à Fuad Pacha de la copie d'une requête qui a été adressée à son Excellence par quarante-trois habitants notables de Baalbek, et appelle l'attention du Commissaire Ottoman sur la situation alarmante de cette localité.

Fuad Pacha déclare n'avoir pas reçu cette requête, et promet de prendre toutes les mesures qui, après information, auront été reconnues nécessaires pour améliorer la situation de Baalbek.

Au sujet de Djezin les renseignements qu'il a fait recueillir l'ont conduit à penser que l'état des choses n'y était pas aussi désespéré qu'on le disait. La situation des habitants de Djezin est pénible à beaucoup d'égards; mais elle n'est pas exceptionnellement mauvaise. Il a fait distribuer aux plus nécessiteux des billets sur la remise desquels il auraient pu recevoir à Mokhtara des objets de literie de première nécessité. A son grand étonnement, pas un ne s'est présenté.

M. le Commissaire Français demande à son Excellence Fuad Pacha s'il a pris des informations touchant le fait signalé dans une précédente séance de 500 Damasquins exilés à Tripoli, et qui, par leurs propos et leur attitude, jettent l'épouvante au sein des populations Chrétiennes.

Fuad Pacha répond qu'il a écrit à ce sujet à Ahmed Pacha. Il n'en a point encore reçu de réponse, mais il croit pouvoir dire que le chiffre de 500 Damasquins lui paraît d'avance très exagéré.

M. Bécclard interpelle Fuad Pacha relativement aux incidents de diverse nature qui se sont produits dernièrement dans les environs de Damas.

Fuad Pacha entre à ce sujet dans quelques développements, d'où il résulte que des Bédouins ont pillé un village de Hauran; que dans un autre village l'annonce de la perception d'un impôt a occasionné des troubles et la fuite des habitants; que les Druses réfugiés dans le Hauran avaient offert de restituer les objets pillés qu'ils détiennent, pourvu qu'on leur accordât une amnistie en compensation; que le Gouvernement n'a pas cru pouvoir amnistier des criminels

condamnés par contumace à la peine de mort; que s'ils ont échappé jusqu'à présent au glaive de la justice et trouvé un refuge dans le Hauran, cela tient uniquement à ce que l'autorité ne peut pas, vu le mauvais état de la saison, aller les y poursuivre, mais qu'en attendant que le moment soit venu de diriger contre eux les forces militaires nécessaires pour les réduire à l'obéissance, il use de ménagements à leur égard, afin d'empêcher qu'ils ne portent le désordre dans les contrées environnantes.

M. Bécclard pose la question de savoir, si une expédition dans le Hauran, jugée nécessaire par le Commissaire Ottoman, n'aurait pas pu être tentée par les troupes de la garnison de Damas avant la mauvaise saison.

M. Novikow fait observer que les ménagements dont Fuad Pacha a cru devoir user à l'égard des Druses réfugiés dans le Hauran, ne paraissent pas avoir atteint le résultat qu'il avait en vue, puisque des actes de brigandage se commettent journellement dans cette portion du territoire de l'Empire.

Fuad Pacha répond que ce ne sont pas là des faits exceptionnels, mais qu'ils constituent l'état normal du pays; qu'il peut répondre de la tranquillité dans les villes, mais que dans les campagnes qui sont hors de sa portée, et où il n'a pas les moyens d'action suffisants, il lui est impossible de maintenir dans l'ordre des populations qui ne reconnaissent aucune loi et n'ont jamais été qu'à moitié soumises.

M. Novikow émet l'avis que, sans la réduction du Hauran, il n'y a point de tranquillité à venir possible pour la Syrie.

Lord Dufferin est aussi d'avis que cette mesure est très-urgente.

La séance est levée 5 heures et demie.

(Suivent les signatures.)

No. 521.

Lord Dufferin to Lord J. Russell.—(Received March 26.)

(No. 78.)

My Lord,

Beyrouth, March 10, 1861.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Lordship's information, copies of further despatches which I have this day addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 521.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrouth, February 27, 1861.

I HAVE to apologize for having delayed to comply with the instructions contained in your Excellency's despatch of the 12th instant, but I have been so busily occupied during the last week by business connected with the judicial proceedings of the Extraordinary Tribunal of Beyrouth, that it was impossible for me to transmit, by last Monday's mail, the information with which your Excellency desires to be furnished respecting the amount of the indemnity it is proposed should be levied on the Moslem population of Damascus.

On the 10th of last November M. Bécclard communicated to the Commission a paper, with which he had been furnished by M. Outrey at Damascus, in which the losses of the Christian population were calculated at 150,000,000 piastres (1,250,000*l.* sterling). After due inquiry it was decided by the Commission that this was a very moderate estimation of their claims, and Fuad Pasha himself was the first to accept it as a basis for the settlement of the indemnity.

The next question that arose was, as to the mode in which such a large sum was to be provided. M. Outrey had suggested that a tax of 34,000,000 piastres should be levied on Damascus; that the villages in the neighbourhood, whose inhabitants largely participated in the plunder, should be mulcted to the

amount of 24,000,000 piastres, either in cash or in building materials; that 8,000,000 piastres should be furnished by the people of the Hauran; 30,000,000 piastres by the other inhabitants of the province; and that the Porte should supply the remainder by the sale of Government property and of confiscated estates, to the amount of 22,000,000 piastres more; the payments to be made in instalments, extending over a period of one year and a-half.

Two objections were made to this proposal, one emanating from M. Béclet and the Representatives of Russia and Prussia, and the other from myself.

The French Commissioner found fault with the delay permitted for the collection of the money, which, he suggested, should be exacted in the course of a week, and I ventured to protest against the injustice of involving the innocent peasantry of the whole province in the same penal sentence with the citizens of Damascus; but no one seemed to consider that the 35,000,000 piastres, at which that city had been assessed, was an extravagant sum, and Fuad Pasha himself had even suggested 60,000,000 piastres, as the proper proportion which its inhabitants might be called upon to pay.

My representations on behalf of the uncompromised rural populations having been successful, and his Excellency making no objection to the amount of 40,000,000 piastres for Damascus, that is to say, 16 per cent. on one year's income of every tax-paying inhabitant, or to 24,000,000 piastres for the villages, it was agreed that the remainder of M. Outrey's proposal should be dropped, and that it should be left to the discretion of the Porte to supply the 86,000,000 piastres deficit, the Commission merely reserving to itself the right of pronouncing on the far narrower question of the periods at which the instalments were to fall due.

M. Béclet's proposal to collect the whole sum within a week was simply absurd. It was probably hazarded on the chance of entrapping the Commission into a resolution sufficiently impossible of execution, to afford to the French army an excuse for marching on Damascus, in order to enforce its decisions.

After the most careful inquiries I satisfied myself that 10,000,000 piastres a month was the most rapid rate at which the sum in question could be collected without injuring the city's already half-paralyzed springs of industry, and five months from the beginning of the year, practically seven months from the date when the question first arose, was finally adopted by the more moderate of M. Béclet's colleagues. Fuad Pasha contended for nine months; I did my best to support him, and a very satisfactory compromise was on the point of being arrived at, when the Porte suddenly transferred the settlement of this important question from Syria to Constantinople.

The consequence of this interference on the part of the Central Government has been most pernicious. As I have already informed your Excellency, there is a fixed conviction in the minds of the Christian population of the Province that the calamities which lately overtook them were authorized by the Porte. The only way for Fuad Pasha to remove such an impression was by at once entering on the work of reparation. But whence were the necessary funds to be obtained? It was evident Constantinople could not be expected to supply them. A retributive tax on Damascus seemed to be the most expeditious, just, and natural expedient within his reach, supplying, as it did, a striking indication of the sincerely beneficent intention of the Government towards its Christian subjects.

From any politic act of this kind he was unexpectedly debarred: whether his Government acted at his own invitation or not is, of course, another question. The consequence has been, that up to this moment, although he has been more than seven months in the country, not a single step has been taken to restore the wretched Christians of Damascus to their homes. Their quarter stands as it was left on the morning after the massacres. The greater part of its inhabitants are at Beyrout, and the small proportion who have lingered behind, under the sinister shelter of the Moslem houses, into which they were originally thrust, are coming away as soon as the roads are open, not unreasonably refusing to sojourn any longer in a town where they can have no homes of their own, where no means remain of earning a livelihood, and where the daily rations of the Government on which they have been dependent during the winter are kept thirty or forty days in arrear.

This renewal of the exodus, stimulated and encouraged by designing persons at Damascus, exaggerated and attributed to other causes by designing

persons here, naturally enough reacts upon the minds of the panic-struck Christian population of the country, and a state of unreasonable alarm is everywhere maintained which paralyzes every description of trade, and will probably greatly endanger the silk crop in the Mountain.

If only Fuad Pasha could have been put in a position to make a *bond fide* commencement of the work of reparation at Damascus, if it had become generally known that the question of the indemnities was settled in a manner satisfactory to the European Commission, and that the Porte in its solicitude for its Christian subjects was prepared even to press, with a certain amount of vigour, their Mahometan persecutors, the position of the Government at the present moment would have been less disadvantageous, and we who are endeavouring sincerely to aid its efforts, would be enabled to countervail more successfully the efforts of those whose only object is to vilify all it does.

Your Excellency will now understand the sense in which I alluded to the way in which the Turkish Commissioner's action on the spot has been sometimes prejudicially hampered by his colleagues at head-quarters. I was far from desiring to make any complaint against his Excellency. In a most difficult and painful position, he has done his best to act in accordance with the interests of his Sovereign, and it is probable that no one in the service of the Porte would have held up so stoutly against the difficulties which beset him on every side; and I only regret that, in endeavouring to submit to your Excellency my appreciation of what I saw passing around me, I should have expressed myself so hastily as to have left on your mind a different impression than that which I intended to convey.

No one is more convinced than I am of the sincere and liberal motives which actuate the principal advisers of His Imperial Majesty, and if, in allusion to Emin Pasha's having turned out of the Council a person introduced into it by Fuad Pasha himself, in consideration of his having been the only Moslem of influence at Damascus who had distinguished himself by protecting the Christians during the massacres, I talked of the fanatical spirit which seemed to animate the functionary last come from Constantinople, it was because an unfortunate significance naturally attaches itself to such an act.

I am painfully aware, however, that my inexperience and imperfect acquaintance with the way in which the administration at Constantinople is conducted renders me quite unfit to pronounce an opinion on such matters; and if from time to time I am bold enough to hazard a conjecture in the sense of those to which your Excellency alludes, it is only because I am aware that your Excellency will at once correct whatever is erroneous in my impressions.

I have, &c.

(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

P.S.—I ought to have informed your Excellency long ere this that the Commission had furnished Fuad Pasha with a joint list, containing the names of those persons who, in consideration of their good conduct during the disturbances, ought to be exempted from the tax it was proposed should be levied on Damascus.

D. AND C.

Inclosure 2 in No. 521.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, March 4, 1861.

I TRUST your Excellency will forgive me if I venture to trouble you with a short explanation relative to one of the Articles in my Memorandum for the reorganization of Syria, to which I see, by a despatch addressed by your Excellency to Lord John Russell, you attach a very different meaning from that which I intended it should convey.

The Article in question proposes "to extend the benefit of European intervention to all the Christians in Syria;" but your Excellency has concluded that I intended "to place all the Christian subjects of the Porte in Syria under foreign protection."

This is quite the reverse of what I should ever think of advocating. If I talked of extending the benefit of the intervention of Europe to the Christians of Syria, it was with reference to the labours of the Commission itself who represented that intervention, and whom I thus invited to devise a plan for the reorganization of the whole province, instead of merely confining their attention to the Lebanon.

So far from desiring to enforce the system of "Consular protection," which appears to me to be one of the greatest curses of the country, I had even gone so far as to propose to my colleagues that its entire abolition should be especially recommended in our Report.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE

Inclosure 3 in No. 521.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, March 7, 1861.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Excellency's information, copies of two letters: one from Bishop Tobia to the Christians of Deir-el-Kamar, written previously to the occurrences at that place; and the other from a Christian named Halib Akawi, also of Deir-el-Kamar, to Said Bek Jumblat, written about the same time. Accompanying the latter is an explanatory Memorandum by Mr. Consul Rogers.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 4 in No. 521.

Bishop Tobia to the Chief People of Deir-el-Kamar.

(Translation.)

May 20, 1860.

AFTER invoking on you the Divine blessing, and inquiring after your state, I have to acknowledge receipt of your letter dated the day before yesterday (May 18), and am much pleased to hear of your peace. I understand the excuses which you therein give to me for your reluctance up to the present time in furnishing intelligence of occurrences in your neighbourhood. Your excuse has been accepted, and no blame has been attached to you. I am pleased with your zeal and your excessive energy in everything which concerns public good, love of the country, peace, quietness, and domestic happiness. We have made out a diary containing the news of your district up to the present day, which exhibits the direction of the thoughts of the Chiefs of the Druse community for quietness, and removal of motives for intriguing disturbance which might lead to an outbreak and the kindling of the fire of war.

When I examined these thoughts, and compared them with the thoughts of the Christian community (who are opposed to the creation and perpetuation of hatred, and seek to turn away from all movements and all intriguing, both openly and covertly, as is well known to you), from this comparison I am obliged either to turn aside, and accept as true the statements of the thoughts of the Chiefs of the Druse community which have been represented to you as desiring the destruction of the root of evil and the cessation of all movement and intrigue, or to the comparison of these statements with what has been seen by their acts, and is still seen by their deeds, against the people of the district of Jezzin, slaying and ruining them by false testimony, and stoppage of the roads from their homes in all directions, so that they (the people of Jezzin) have become shut up and deprived of business from all quarters, while they have beheld an assemblage of the Druses over against them. Therefore I shall be obliged to alter my opinion, but I fear being betrayed; and if that happen, seeing that the Christians are sleeping on the cushions of security, without doubt there will happen to them what happened in the years 1841 and 1845, and we cannot rely on our thoughts nor assure ourselves from betrayal until we see the road to Jezzin open, at least

before you, and until you are able to repair to Jezzin in all security. When you have accomplished this, then indeed we will consent to that which you saw and witnessed. We decide against everything which is opposed to this, because the people of the district of Jezzin have clearly shown that they have given up all hope of their lives, owing to the stoppage of all communications with them from every direction.

Direct your attention and give true intelligence of this attempt; and if you succeed in it, I shall be grateful for your acts of zeal, and I shall be able to agree entirely to your proposition for the expulsion and hatred of the Druses, (who are) the causes of movements and intrigues. If you do not succeed in this endeavour in a short time, we shall be obliged to follow the thought which is hateful; and, what is more, will have a bad end if you divert your attention and confide matters to chance. This, for the excellence of your intelligence, is sufficient, and we look for an answer on this matter as soon as possible, for the tranquillity of our mind.

We pray God to open the eyes of the foolish, that they may foresee the end of these matters, and beware of dangers which lead to destruction and perdition. May the Divine blessing rest upon you, and may you be preserved.

(Signature.)

Inclosure 5 in No. 521.

Halib Akawi to Said Bek Jumblat.

(Translation.)

ON my arrival at this place (Beyrout), I found the Maronites here causing great excitement, informing the people in all the districts of the Mountain from Jibbet B'sheni to Zahlé, that war had broken out between the Druses of Shuf and the Christians of Aklim Jezzin, and telling them to keep themselves in readiness to proceed upon the receipt of another letter. I found that they had sent fifty men of Deir-el-Kamar and of Aklim Jezzin, with Tannûs Shahin, the Aga and Emir Nasif of Jezzin, to Hadeth; that thence, on their numbers being completed, they should go by the way of Sidon to Jezzin, and that they should kill any Druses or Metualis they might meet on the road. On hearing this I went immediately to Mr. Nicola Portalis, who gave notice of it to the Government. The Government sent and gave notice to the Maronites of Beyrout, telling them, that if they did not send and disperse their people, soldiers would be sent against them, who would seize them and take them to the galleys for life. So the Maronites sent and informed the assemblage of this message.

On the following day this answer was received in Beyrout:—

"We have made all our preparations, and it is our intention to send 500 people to the assistance of those at Jezzin, &c., and have given notice in all the districts for the people to prepare themselves."

This letter came to Bishop Tobia.

They answered that they should send word to Jibbet B'sheni, to Jebel, to Batrûn, to Youssef Keram, and to Tannûs Shahin, to prepare themselves to come to the Meten, and asking them for ammunition to be sent to Juneh. The people of Beyrout then took the letter, sent copies of it to all parts, and excited the people to rise in numbers and repair to the Meten.

On hearing this, Assaad Shawsh went to Bishop Tobia and asked what was the object of the proceedings, showing the ruin which would accrue. The Bishop answered him, "If you, people of Deir-el-Kamar, do not obey, and refuse to go to war, then I will cause the Druses and Christians together to attack you."

On receiving this answer he left the Bishop, who afterwards sent B'shara Faroon to Tannûs Shahin to excite him to make haste and come, and also sent Shantiri to the Meten and to the Mokâtâa, to collect people of the Mokâtâa in the Meten. We understand that they went. The heads of this movement amongst the Maronites are Khalil Efendi Nakash, Naun Kikano, and Assaad Tabet; and the Maronite community have declared themselves willing to pay expenses to the amount of 1,000 purses (about 4,170l. sterling), and it is Bishop Tobia's wish to head the troops in person.

Assaad Shawsh and myself (your servant), when we saw this, we foretold the ruin of the country.

We went together to the notables of our community, and informed them: we found that they knew nothing about it. They told us to go to the British Consul-General, so we went and told him all, and he answered that he would inform the Government, and also said that if the Christians persisted, the Government would attack them with soldiers, and, moreover, he promised to take measures. The Greek Catholic community wrote letters to their co-religionists at Zahleh, warning them not to do anything, but to remain at home, and to publish that this movement was from the Maronites alone, and it is certain that after the receipt of such a letter they (the Greek Catholics) will take no part.

When I left Beyrout, I sent a messenger to Khalil Efendi Shawish, and asked for an interview at Kefr Shima; he came, and I told him all, and I begged him to inform the Kaimakam, and afterwards to inform the Mushir. Immediately after the interview he went to Shweifat to tell his Excellency.

There was a talk with Emir Mejid that he should become the leader; he promised to do so after the commencement of hostilities, and they promised him that they would excite the people to rise. On the road, I met a messenger from Beyrout going to Abei.

This is what I have learnt, and I here communicate it to you. I beg you to inform the Government that the information from the Consuls, from the Kaimakam, and from yourself, be all in accordance.

In Beyrout the Greeks and the Greek Catholics refused to join the Maronites in this work; the latter invited them to a meeting, but they would not go, yet the Maronites say that the Greeks and Greek Catholics are wishing for war, and that they themselves wish to avoid it.

Yours, &c.
(Signed) HALIB AKAWI.

Memorandum on Halib Akawi's Letter to Said Bek Jumblât.

THE writer of this letter is a Christian of Deir-el-Kamar, whose house and much of whose property were destroyed by the assailants during the siege. His evidence at the trial of Said Bek, and the information he has imparted at private conferences, is framed in temperate language and bears the stamp of truthfulness. The Emir Mejid, who is alluded to, is of the Shehab family, and is the same who, some time ago, divorced his Turkish wife and embraced Christianity, on the promise of the Bishop Tobia that he should be proposed as Kaimakam of Mount Lebanon, and who has now been proposed by the Christians for that office.

This letter bears no date, but appears to have been written a few days before the outbreak, probably a day or two after the accompanying letter from Bishop Tobia. It is even probable that the inclosed letter from Bishop Tobia is the one alluded to, and that the important matter was detailed in an unsigned note inclosed in it, as is the custom in this country.

(Signed) E. T. ROGERS.
Beyrout, March 1, 1861.

Inclosure 6 in No. 521.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, March 10, 1861.

WITH reference to the 22nd Protocol, inclosed in my despatch of the 7th instant, I have the honour to transmit herewith, for your Excellency's information, copy of a letter addressed by Tanios Shaheen to the inhabitants of the district of Jebail, in the Kesrouan.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 7 in No. 521.

Tanios Shaheen to the Wakeels and Inhabitants of Jebail.

(Translation.)

(After compliments.)

April 3, 1860.

I HAVE received your letter and understood all that you say with regard to the arrival of Emir Yousef and the Bimbashi, bearing a bouyourouldi for the administration of Jebail. Do not accept it, for I have a bouyourouldi from the seven Sovereigns for the emancipation of all the Christians, who are no longer to be in bondage to any one; if you desire to be emancipated from your slavery no one can prevent you, neither the Mushir nor the Kaimakam. I inclose an order to the Emir Yousef to return to his place: deliver it to him without delay, and do not fear anything. If you require a body of men let me know, and I will send one immediately. Should the Emir venture to do anything let me know, and I will come myself with all my men. Fear nothing, for this is a matter which no longer concerns you, it concerns me. Any village of Jebail that wishes to unite with you let it name Vakeels over it in the village, who will enter their names with the Vakeel, lest the assembly should break up entirely; he that wishes to do so let him come on the part of the village, or let him inscribe his name in the register, which will be sufficient. I have charged the bearer with certain verbal communications, which he will deliver to you.

Your Brother,
(Signed and sealed) TANIOS SHAHEEN.

P.S.—I transmit herewith a letter to Emir Yousef; deliver it to him at once and immediately, for it is most important that it should be delivered; and let me know what his answer will be; for I have plainly told him that if he hesitates he will have my men upon him from every direction. I also inclose a letter to Yezbek Lahood; deliver it to him and intimate to him verbally that he is to desist from his design; do not fear anything; and this is sufficient for your sagacity.

(Signed) TANIOS SHAHEEN.

No. 522.

Lord Dufferin to Lord J. Russell.—(Received March 26.)

(No. 79.)

Beyrout, March 10, 1861.

My Lord,

PERHAPS I may be permitted to correct a misapprehension relative to the late outbreak at Damascus, which I see has found its way into the newspapers.

It is stated, and I believe generally credited, that it was a horde of Druses who broke into that city and sacked the Christian quarter. This, however, is not what took place. The slaughter, rapine, and burning at Damascus were the work of its Moslem population. A certain number of Druses resided in the town, and a few may have come in from the neighbourhood, and some of them, no doubt, participated in the plundering, as did also a large number of the inhabitants of the Koordish villages in the vicinity; but the authors of what occurred, and the chief actors, were the citizens themselves.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

No. 523.

Lord Dufferin to Lord J. Russell.—(Received March 26.)

(No. 80.)

Beyrout, March 10, 1861.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship copies of my despatches to Sir Henry Bulwer relative to the judgments which have been passed by the Extraordinary Tribunal of Beyrout, and by the Court-martial of Mokhtara, on the Turkish and Druse prisoners.

It is not my intention to trouble your Lordship with any further observations on the painful and anxious question connected with these proceedings;

but I cannot allow the mail to be closed without particularly calling your attention to the inconsistent reasonings of a portion of the communication (Annex 3 to the twenty-third Protocol) addressed by his Excellency Fuad Pasha to the Commissioners of France, Great Britain, Prussia, and Russia, in reply to the note they had the honour of transmitting him.

The Ottoman Plenipotentiary justifies the sentence of death passed indiscriminately on all the Druse Chiefs by a reference to a Law of the Empire which decrees capital punishment against those "who organize a conspiracy to promote a rising of one section of a population against another." But a little further on he states, "Le Kesrouan était devenu depuis longtemps le foyer de cette opposition, et d'une grande agitation." And again, "Ce sont les Maronites qui se sont soulevés en masse contre les Druses. Le signal de la guerre est donné par les premiers; une bande armée de Chrétiens était venue la première passer de la Kaimakamie Chrétienne dans celle des Druses. Ce fut le début de cette guerre civile qui a fini par tant de calamités."

If these latter statements are true—and all the information I have been able to obtain tends to confirm them—how can those who were attacked be punished as "conspirators who plotted a rising?"

This time, at all events, it was the lamb who dirtied the stream, and if the wolf standing lower down took it amiss, it must thank its own folly for the consequences. As far as I have been able to unravel the abominable mystery of the late disturbances in the Mountain, the case stands pretty much thus:—

For some time past the Christian population, already agitated by the success of the anti-feudal movement, and stimulated to further efforts by the intrigues of their priesthood, had been long meditating an onslaught on the Druses, which was eventually to end in the overthrow of Turkish authority in Lebanon. The Turks perceiving what was intended, and afraid, probably, of using force towards the Christians, determined to chastise them through the instrumentality of the Druses.

Whether they foresaw the length to which matters would be carried it is impossible to say, but it is certain they evinced in the pursuit of their object a brutal indifference to the loss of human life which might ensue. Now that the affair has assumed its present tragic aspect, they utterly deny all complicity, and represent themselves as the victims of Christian insolence and Druse disobedience; but whatever may be the truth of the former of these statements, every one acquainted with the country must smile at the transparent inaccuracy of the latter. Had the Turkish Pasha really desired the Druses to keep quiet, not a man would have stirred; and although all evidence on the subject has been burked, there are unmistakeable indications of the kind of understanding which existed between the authorities and the Chiefs. Said Bek seems to be the only one of the Druse magnates who foresaw the trap into which they might fall, and although he could not openly withstand the continued pressure of his own people's enthusiasm, and the tacit encouragement of the Government, he evidently did his best to keep out of the scrape. Are, then, the Turks to be allowed to make scapegoats of the Druses? In order to be logical, Fuad Pasha has sentenced the eleven Chiefs to death. By stigmatizing them as rebels he hopes to make us forget they were accomplices. If his victims were really the men who perpetrated the horrors that astounded Europe last summer, the title under which they suffered would be a matter of more indifference. But the scandalous character of the present proceeding consists in the fact that it is the innocent portion of the community that are sacrificed.

Against such an outrage it is natural to suppose all Europe would protest; but unfortunately, among the prisoners who surrendered themselves, are one or two especially obnoxious to the Maronite nation. In condemning these persons his Excellency could count on the support of a majority of the Commissioners, and although I do not imagine he is really anxious that the unjust decision of his Tribunal should be carried into execution, he not unreasonably looks forward to the eventualities which may arise in favour of the Turkish prisoners, by giving the subject its present shape before reference to Constantinople.

In conclusion, it is unnecessary for me to assure your Lordship that during the whole of this anxious time I have done my best to act with honesty and impartiality. Convinced that it was not your Lordship's wish I should constitute myself the partizan of any particular community, or still less become the apologist of murderers and assassins, I determined that no local

jealousies should sway my judgment. Having done what was possible to correct the flagrant abuses which characterised the commencement of the Court's proceedings, I waited patiently till the investigation was concluded before pronouncing an opinion. As long as the case was pending I would not even speak to his Excellency upon the subject; and I have never endeavoured, by my personal influence, to modify his intentions. Had the prisoners been proved guilty, though I might have appealed to his clemency on behalf of a certain number of those condemned, I should not have disputed the justice of the sentence; and if I have now interfered to prevent the ratification of the verdict of the Court, it is because I considered it to be unjust.

I have, &c.

(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 523.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, March 7, 1861.

I HAVE now the honour of forwarding to your Excellency the Protocols of the final Conferences of the Commission on the proceedings and judgments of the Extraordinary Tribunal of Beyrout.

Your Excellency will perceive that in consequence of the great divergence of opinion which manifested itself between the majority of the European Representatives and himself regarding the degree of culpability attaching to the Turkish officials, as well as on account of the want of unanimity among ourselves on many vital points affecting the Druse Chiefs, the Turkish Plenipotentiary has determined to maintain *ad interim* the verdicts recorded by his Court, and to refer the further consideration of the subject to Constantinople.

Such a course seems to have been the only one left open to his Excellency, and I cannot but congratulate myself that so favourable an opportunity should be afforded for revising the decisions of the Beyrout Tribunal, founded, as I believe many of them to be, on a false interpretation of the law, and on insufficient evidence. It is also a very fortunate circumstance that the ultimate appreciation of a question on which the lives of so many human beings are depending, should be transferred from a locality so rife with passion and prejudice as Beyrout to the more tranquil atmosphere of a distant capital; and above all things it is a personal satisfaction to myself to think that your Excellency's efficient interposition will probably lead to the reversal of many of the absurd and iniquitous decrees of the incompetent Court of justice which Fuad Pasha, on his arrival in Syria, was obliged to extemporize out of the first materials that came to hand.

As I have already written at great length on the various topics connected with the Beyrout trials, and as the Protocols I now transmit still further elucidate the subject, I need not trouble your Excellency with many additional observations, more especially as I have minutely described in my previous despatches the individual opinions of each of my colleagues. Nevertheless, it may be well, before altogether concluding the exposition of the case, to notice the various considerations which have induced me to adhere now to one, now to another of the sections into which each successive phase of the debate divided the Commission.

As, however, no two of us thought exactly alike on every point, the combinations into which we were resolved after every discussion became as various and complex as the changes in a kaleidoscope, and it becomes difficult to do more than distinguish the broader features of the dispute. For example, in conjunction with my colleagues of France, Prussia, and Russia, I felt compelled to call for an aggravation of the sentences passed on the two Turkish Pashas and Colonel Nouri Bey; but at this point M. Novikow and myself separated from the French and Prussian Commissioners, and united with the Austrian Representative in declining to press for any extreme punishment being inflicted on the subordinate Turkish officials. Again, M. Weckbecker, M. Novikow, and I opposed the indiscriminate, and in our opinion unjust, severity with which Fuad Pasha, M. Béclard, and M. de Rebfues desired to visit the Druse Chiefs in prison at Beyrout, inasmuch as most of them had merely taken part in the war,

and were far less deserving of punishment than the ringleaders of the massacres who had been condemned at Mokhtara. The case of Said Bey, however, again separated M. Novikow from the Austrian Commissioner and myself, for whereas we thought he ought to be acquitted with the other five Druse prisoners, against whom nothing had been proved, the Russian Representative, though admitting that no evidence had been produced on his trial sufficient to secure a legal conviction, considered that he ought to be put to death.

Your Excellency will thus perceive that independently of the difference of opinion existing between myself, in common with the majority of the Commission, and Fuad Pasha, supported by M. Weckbecker, on the culpability of the two Turkish Pashas, I am also at issue with his Excellency and two of my colleagues on the principles which ought to guide us in estimating the guilt or innocence of the Druse Chiefs. As almost all the Commissioners share my opinion on the first point, it is unnecessary I should trouble your Excellency by enforcing it; I will, therefore, merely confine myself to that which has regard to the Druse prisoners.

The Turkish Commissioner contends that because the Druse nation flew to arms, they come within the meaning of that section of the Turkish law which condemns to death all those who excite one portion of the Sultan's subjects to make war on another. But as it is universally admitted that it was the Christians who commenced the attack, it is absurd to apply the canon in question to the present case. The relations of the Lebanon tribes to each other are so exceptional, their right to defend themselves when attacked has been so often recognised, the Turkish authority has always been so incompetent to maintain order, and its attitude on this occasion was, to say the least, so very ambiguous that the Druses have clearly the right to require that a distinction should be maintained between the ordinary hostile encounters which in this country are dignified by the name of war, and the massacres which succeeded.

Now, among the captive Druse Chiefs at Beyrout there are certainly five who are not even supposed to have had anything to do with the butcheries in which the contest terminated, and another, Said Bey Jumblatt, who seems from the first to have desired peace, to have remained at home, and to have saved hundreds of Christians. Are these men to be treated as murderers? Are they even deserving of punishment? Yes, says M. Bécclard, they are the Chiefs of the nation. The nation has been guilty of great crimes; punish the Chiefs, and you punish the most guilty. Then why put them on their trial? To what end this long delay of five months, the innumerable witnesses, and the superfluous intervention of a Court of Justice? Why not have taken their heads off directly they surrendered themselves into the hands of Fuad Pasha? Again, is no distinction to be drawn between those who are known to have been the most moderate of the Druse leaders, who voluntarily challenged an investigation of their conduct, and the bloodstained barbarians whose avowed atrocities induced them to fly to the Hauran? Are the least compromised to suffer because the most guilty have escaped? Such jurisprudence would render the Commission odious in the eyes of Europe.

But there is another momentous principle on which I am at issue with my colleagues, and more especially with M. Novikow.

In dealing with the case of Said Bey Jumblatt, this latter gentleman admits in the most explicit terms that the proceedings before the Court have not been sufficient to prove his complicity, either in the massacres or in the war. But public opinion, private information he has himself received, nay, the "fatal exigencies of the prisoner's position," are presumptive evidences of his guilt; therefore let him perish! But is this justice?

Here is a man arraigned on a charge of high treason; for months his trial has been going on; the Crown has strained every nerve to procure his condemnation; all the ordinary indulgences due to his situation have been denied him; yet in the opinion of all the Commissioners except M. Bécclard, and even he seemed shaken by the last perusal of the *procès-verbal*, the evidence against him has completely broken down, notwithstanding that none of the witnesses for the prosecution have been challenged, and that M. Novikow declared it a sacrilege to dispute any Christian testimony given in on oath!

If then, in spite of such ready credence awaiting every accusation produced in Court against Said Bey, nothing has come to light to prove his guilt, how unfair is it to supplement the case against him by accepting as gospel truth all

the vague allegations in which an exasperated and unscrupulous population may indulge.

Even in Europe no credit is attached to any evidence until subjected to the ordeal of a public deposition in a court of justice. How much more necessary is the application of such a test among a people so proverbially untruthful as that of Mount Lebanon.

Had my Russian colleague been a thoughtless and unscrupulous person, I should not have occupied so much time in discussing his opinion, but as his conclusions have been evidently arrived at after a painful and minute study of the cases on which he had to pronounce, I am anxious to account for the difference of opinion which has arisen between us.

The explanation is to be found in the vicious method of investigation he has adopted. His premises once admitted, no other issue was open to him. He naturally enjoys the confidence of all the Greek Christians. It is this community which suffered most severely at Hasbeya; and Said Bey is no doubt considered by them as a personal enemy.

Constantly surrounded then by such influences as these, any man's judgment would become warped; and I consider it a remarkable proof of the impartial spirit in which M. Novikow conducted the investigation, that he should have made so important an admission respecting the legal validity of the verdict, as founded on the proceedings before the Court.

M. de Rehfuès' opinion on this subject is identical, I believe, with that of the Russian Commissioner.

The case then, as it regards the Druses, may be stated in the following simple manner:—

If a participation in the defensive war forced upon them by the Christians is to be considered an act of high treason, punishable with death, the sentences of the tribunal are just.

If the first Chiefs who put themselves within the reach of the Turkish authorities are to expiate the guilt of the whole nation, the sentences of the tribunal are just.

If public opinion is to be accepted as proof, if the tales current among an exasperated multitude is proof, if, irrespective of all internal evidence to the contrary, and in spite of manifest exaggerations and self-contradictions, it is sacrilege to dispute the oath of a Christian witness, the sentences of the tribunal are just.

But if a distinction is to be drawn between mountain warfare and savage massacre; if each prisoner's case is to be decided on its own individual merits; and if the verdict is to depend on the evidence adduced before the Court by whom the case is examined,—of the eleven Druse prisoners tried by the Extraordinary Tribunal of Beyrout, six, including Said Bey, must be acquitted. The sentences of three more ought to be commuted, and two may be allowed to suffer the just penalty of their crimes.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

P.S.—In order to make the matter as clear as possible, I transmit a Table of the prisoners' names, the sentences passed by the Court, together with the opinions of the several Commissioners on each sentence.

D. AND C.

Inclosure 2 in No. 523.

Protocol of the Twenty-second Meeting of the Syrian Commission, held at Beyrout, February 27, 1861.

LE Mercredi, vingt-sept Février, mil huit cent soixante-un, tous les Commissaires étant réunis à Beyrout sous la présidence de Fuad Pacha, la séance est ouverte à 2 heures et demie.

Le *procès-verbal* de la dernière séance en date du 29 Janvier, est lu et adopté.

Son Excellence Fuad Pacha fait part à la Commission de diverses informations qu'il a recueillies, touchant les questions qui lui ont été posées au sujet de

Baalbek et Tripoli. Il résulte d'une première pièce, signée par les sept membres du Medjlis de Tripoli, que trente-trois Damasquins seulement résident dans cette ville. Une lettre, adressée par l'Evêque Grec de Tripoli au Gouverneur, atteste que le Mudir du district du Caïti ne retient dans son harem aucune femme Chrétienne de Damas, comme on l'en avait accusé. En troisième lieu, par une déclaration en règle, les Représentants des Patriarches Grec, Catholique, et Maronite, et des Evêques, ainsi que de plusieurs religieux et laïques notables de Baalbek, déclarent que le Gouverneur de cette localité, Emin Bey, bien loin d'y commettre des exactions, y procure aux Chrétiens toute la sécurité désirable; s'emploie avec zèle tant à leur faire restituer les objets qui leur avaient été enlevés, qu'à leur fournir les secours nécessaires pour la culture de leurs terres, le tout conformément aux intentions de son Excellence.

Son Excellence le Commissaire Ottoman informe ensuite la Commission de l'envoi qui lui a été fait des instructions qu'il attendait de son Gouvernement sur la question de l'indemnité due aux Chrétiens de Damas. Le règlement de cette question, dit Fuad Pacha, est impérieusement réclamé par les circonstances; cependant il est une autre affaire dont la solution est plus urgente encore, c'est celle de la répression et du châtement à infliger aux individus qui ont participé aux massacres de la Montagne, ou aux fonctionnaires et Chefs Druses qui, par position, en ont été considérés comme responsables. Son Excellence a reçu à ce sujet de MM. les Commissaires de France, de Grande Bretagne, de Prusse, et de Russie, une note collective, contenant l'expression de leur opinion sur les sentences proposées par le Tribunal Extraordinaire de Beyrouth (Annexe 1), et de M. le Commissaire d'Autriche une note séparée (Annexe 2), concernant le même objet. En réponse à cette double communication, Fuad Pacha a rédigé un mémoire, dans lequel il expose les motifs qui le déterminent à confirmer les sentences du dit Tribunal.

Après lecture de ce mémoire (Annexe 3), son Excellence le Commissaire du Sultan ajoute que, s'il conclue à l'application d'une peine de second ordre aux fonctionnaires et officiers Ottomans, ce n'est point que ses pouvoirs ne l'autorisent à modifier les sentences, puisque le Tribunal ne les rend, pour ainsi dire, que provisoirement et à titre consultatif; ni qu'il se sent porté à l'indulgence vis-à-vis des agents de l'autorité, puisque à Damas il n'a pas hésité à frapper de mort un grand nombre d'entr'eux, et notamment Ahmed Pacha, personnage considérable qui avait même autrefois rendu de grands services à l'Empire; mais c'est parce que sa conscience ne lui permet pas de condamner à la peine capitale des hommes en faveur desquels des circonstances atténuantes peuvent être légitimement invoquées.

M. le Commissaire Français remarque à ce sujet que, dans le mémoire dont il vient d'être donné lecture, on présente, comme circonstance atténuante, ce fait que Kourchid Pacha se serait plaint antérieurement auprès de son Gouvernement de n'avoir point à sa disposition des forces suffisantes pour maintenir l'ordre, et que même, à plus d'une reprise, il aurait offert sa démission. Si en effet de telles démarches, répétées par l'ex-Gouverneur de Sayda, sont demeurées sans résultat, on est amené à en conclure que sa responsabilité, sans être complètement mise à couvert, est au moins partagée par la Sublime Porte. C'est là une conséquence dont la gravité ne doit certainement pas échapper au Ministre de l'Empereur, et que M. Béchard éprouverait pour son compte de la répugnance à admettre. Il persiste à croire que Kourchid Pacha avait à sa disposition des moyens suffisants pour maintenir l'ordre, puisque, sur les 5,000 hommes composant l'effectif total des troupes de Syrie, il y en avait 2,000 dans la Province de Sayda. Quant à la démission offerte par Kourchid Pacha, M. Béchard ne voit pas pourquoi elle serait invoquée comme une circonstance atténuante en sa faveur. Le Gouverneur de Damas lui aussi avait offert sa démission, et cependant il a été puni de mort, comme responsable des événements qui s'étaient accomplis à Damas, pendant qu'il était encore en fonctions. Sous ce rapport, la situation de Kourchid Pacha et celle d'Ahmed Pacha présentent une analogie parfaite, et M. le Commissaire de France verrait une sorte d'injustice à ce que le sort de l'un ne fût pas partagé par l'autre. Il fait en outre remarquer que, dans son mémoire, Fuad Pacha accuse les Chrétiens d'avoir été les agresseurs partout, et même sur divers points de la Montagne, où leurs plus dangereux adversaires ne les avaient jamais soupçonnés jusqu'à présent de l'avoir été. Il est vrai qu'une troupe de Chrétiens du Kesrouan a passé le fleuve du Chien, sous la conduite de Tannious Chaïn, le 29 Mai, et qu'une partie d'entr'eux est allée attaquer le village de Beit-Meri et

Baabda.* Mais le Commissaire du Sultan ne doit point ignorer que, le 13 Mai, les Druses de Ouaddi-Etten se sont rassemblés pour arrêter les Chrétiens sur les routes;

Que, le 15, les Druses de Chouf ont levé l'étendard de guerre et se sont portés vers Djezin, sans que les Chrétiens sortissent même de chez eux pour venir à leur rencontre;

Que, le 19, deux Cheiks Druses de la famille de Beit-el-Eid, accompagnés de dix des leurs, ont attaqué les villages de Mazara et de Merjah, désarmés les Chrétiens et pillé des maisons;

Que, le même jour, les Druses du Menaceb et de Baklin, avec armes et drapeaux, se sont portés sur Deir-el-Kamar, et que, les Chrétiens n'étant pas même venus à leur rencontre, ils ont rebroussé chemin, non sans se livrer au pillage, notamment à Mazara et à Menouf, où ils tuèrent un Chrétien, désarmèrent les autres, et détruisirent un moulin;

Que, le 27 Mai, les Druses du district de Chenbar, après s'être réunis et avoir pris les armes, se rendirent à Ebay, où ils tuèrent Elias Gantour, et que ceux de Araamoun-el-Garb se sont portés au Mazara d'Ein-drafil, où ils pillèrent et incendièrent les récoltes;

Que, le 29 enfin, jour où pour la première fois les Chrétiens, après tant de provocations, donnèrent signe de vie, Melhem-el-Amad, avec les gens du district d'El Arkoub et de Chouf, se précipitèrent sur le village d'Ein-el-Masjer et à Beitddin-el-Emir, où ils massacrèrent plusieurs personnes, brûlèrent les récoltes et incendièrent quelques maisons. Il résulte de ces faits et de ces dates dont l'exactitude peut être prouvée, que les Druses ont pris les armes bien avant les Chrétiens; que ces derniers mêmes ont trop longtemps tardé à le faire pour leur salut, et que l'autorité, en ne réprimant point les premiers mouvements des Druses, et en les encourageant par son inaction, demeure entièrement responsable des fatales conséquences de l'insurrection.

M. le Commissaire de France n'admet pas non plus que les conditions administratives particulières auxquelles la Montagne se trouvait soumise, puissent être considérées comme une circonstance atténuante en faveur de Kourchid Pacha. Sans administrer directement la Montagne, il était tenu de maintenir l'ordre, et cette obligation découlait pour lui de ce seul fait, qu'il avait des troupes à Beitddin et à Deir-el-Kamar.

Fuad Pacha répond qu'il n'a pas eu l'intention de déplacer la question. L'état critique des choses en Roumélie a pu mettre la Porte dans la nécessité de dégarnir la Turquie d'Asie, et dans l'impossibilité de déférer à la demande des Gouverneurs qui, à Damas et à Sayda, réclamaient des renforts de troupes, sans qu'il soit pour cela possible de faire remonter jusqu'à elle l'accusation qui pèse sur les agents de l'autorité Ottomane en Syrie. Kourchid Pacha, bien que réduit à des forces insuffisantes, aurait pu faire un meilleur emploi de celles dont il disposait. Avec plus d'énergie et d'habileté, il eût réussi non pas sans doute à prévenir les événements, ni à les réprimer, mais il aurait au moins mis sa responsabilité à couvert; il ne l'a pas fait. Voilà comment il mérite, pour l'exemple, d'être sévèrement puni. Il avait offert sa démission. Cela ne le dispensait point à coup sûr d'agir, mais cela prouve du moins l'embarras où il se trouvait. Ahmed Pacha avait offert sa démission, mais sa situation, par rapport aux événements de Damas, était toute différente. Il ne prit aucune mesure pour les arrêter, tandis que Kourchid Pacha fit quelques efforts, et donna des ordres qui ne furent point exécutés, ou le furent très mal. Ahmed Pacha n'en avait donné aucun, et cependant les désordres avaient lieu dans la ville même qu'il habitait, sous ses yeux pour ainsi dire, tandis que ceux de la Montagne se produisaient en beaucoup d'endroits à la fois et hors de la présence de Kourchid Pacha.

Après une étude approfondie des pièces de ce procès, tant en ce qui concerne les fonctionnaires et officiers Ottomans, qu'en ce qui concerne les Cheiks Druses, M. le Commissaire Russe est obligé, à son grand regret, de déclarer qu'elles ne lui paraissent pas de nature à établir d'une manière bien positive ni la certitude judiciaire de la culpabilité des accusés, ni la valeur intrinsèque des circonstances atténuantes qui ont été prises en considération par le Tribunal de Beyrouth. Il

* Four hundred Christians marched from the Kesrouan into the Mixed Districts. This was the first military movement on either side. The other occasions to which M. Béchard alludes were comparatively insignificant collisions, and could be matched by analogous attacks by small parties of Christians upon Druses. Very early in May bands of Christians had begun to murder Druses.

† In the cases of the Druse Chiefs, the tribunal did its best to procure a conviction, and to collect evidence.

s'est donc trouvé dans la nécessité de rechercher des éléments de conviction en dehors des pièces qui lui ont été communiquées. N'ayant à donner son avis dans cette affaire ni comme Juge, ni comme juré, mais comme Agent Politique, il doit se borner, aux termes de ses instructions, à déterminer la part de responsabilité qui revient à chacun des coupables et provoquer leur punition. Si comme individus, placés dans telle ou telle position, ayant à lutter contre telle ou telle difficulté, les principaux accusés ont pu invoquer, et Kourchid Pacha tout le premier, des circonstances qui paraissent atténuer leur culpabilité personnelle, il en est autrement de la responsabilité qui pèse sur eux comme délégués du pouvoir, chargé de veiller efficacement au maintien de l'ordre. De deux choses l'une : ou ils sont innocents, et dans ce cas ils doivent être acquittés, ce que le Tribunal lui-même n'a pas admis ; ou bien ils sont coupables, et dans ce cas leur faute les rend passibles d'une peine d'autant plus rigoureuse que les conséquences en ont été plus funestes. Or, il y a eu dans la Montagne une immense effusion de sang qui aurait pu et dû être prévenue par les Représentants de l'autorité.

Le Gouverneur-Général de Sayda a encouru la plus grave responsabilité, comme Chef supérieur de la province. Le Général de Division Tahir Pacha partage cette responsabilité, comme Chef militaire. De plus, ayant été chargé par Kourchid Pacha de la Mission Spéciale d'assurer la tranquillité à Deir-el-Kamar, il a rempli cette mission de manière à ce que les résultats en ont été diamétralement opposés au but qu'il s'agissait d'atteindre. Nouri Bey, par une négligence fatale dans l'exécution des ordres, contenus dans le bouyourouldi qui lui traçait sa ligne de conduite, s'est rendu coupable d'un grave délit. La chute de Zahlé, qui a entraîné d'autres malheurs, en a été le résultat.

Quant à Vassif Efendi et à Ahmed Efendi, la voix publique les accuse d'avoir exercé la plus funeste influence sur les déterminations de Kourchid Pacha. Toutefois les réponses qu'ils ont données au Tribunal sont tellement évasives et leurs dénégations si complètes, que, tout en opinant pour une aggravation de leur peine, le Commissaire Russe ne croit pas pouvoir provoquer à leur égard la peine capitale, d'autant plus que, comme subordonnés, il leur est, jusqu'à un certain point, possible de se retrancher derrière la responsabilité de leurs Chefs. Au dire de son Excellence le Commissaire Ottoman, les premiers actes d'agression, même à Racheya et Hasbeya, seraient venus des Chrétiens.* Mais ce n'est qu'après huit jours de calme parfait, et après que les Chrétiens avaient été désarmés par la garnison Ottomane à Hasbeya que l'arrivée d'Aly Amadé y a donné le signal du massacre. Un fait analogue s'est passé à Deir-el-Kamar, où une population inoffensive a été surprise et massacrée, après quelques jours d'un calme relatif. Peu importerait au fond que les Chrétiens aient été les agresseurs sur quelques points, et s'ils l'ont été, ce qui est bien loin d'être prouvé, si même on peut les accuser de s'être rendus coupables de quelques provocations morales, cette circonstance ne disculperait pas les fonctionnaires Ottomans de n'avoir tenté aucun effort pour réprimer l'insurrection matérielle des Druses, et le châtiment qu'ils ont encouru doit être proportionné à l'étendue des désastres qui ont résulté de leur inaction, pour ne pas dire de leur connivence.

En ce qui concerne Kourchid Pacha, Tahir Pacha, et Nouri Bey, son Excellence le Commissaire du Sultan croit devoir répondre que des ordres avaient été adressés par le premier à Tahir Pacha, qui les avait transmis à Nouri Bey et à Abdul Selam, chargés l'un de se rendre à Zahlé et l'autre d'empêcher les troubles à Deir-el-Kamar. Ces ordres ne furent point exécutés ponctuellement à Deir-el-Kamar ; ce qui amena la condamnation d'Abdul Selam, comme des autres officiers qui se sont trouvés présents à des massacres dans d'autres localités. Noury Bey, mal reçu par les habitants de Zahlé, fut dans l'impossibilité d'exécuter son mandat, et cette circonstance constitue évidemment une atténuation de sa faute. Vassif Efendi et Ahmed Efendi ne peuvent qu'à peine être considérés comme des fonctionnaires, et leur responsabilité s'efface devant celle de leurs Chefs.

Avant d'émettre une opinion sur chacune des sentences soumises à son examen, M. le Commissaire Britannique croit devoir exposer avec précision les principes qui l'ont guidé dans cet examen. D'après ce qui a été convenu entre les Représentants des cinq Puissances et son Excellence Fuad Pacha, la Commission avait le droit d'assister, soit en personne, soit par délégué, aux séances du tribunal, et avant qu'une sentence quelconque fût rendue exécutoire par Fuad Pacha, les Commissaires pouvaient soumettre à son Excellence toutes les

observations qu'ils jugeraient nécessaires. Par suite de cet arrangement, les Représentants de l'Europe sont devenus en quelque sorte les assesseurs du Plénipotentiaire Ottoman, et doivent partager avec lui la responsabilité des arrêts qui seront définitivement prononcés. Cette participation leur impose le devoir de se faire non seulement une conviction sur la culpabilité ou l'innocence absolue, mais même sur le degré de culpabilité de chacun des accusés. L'importance de cet point de vue est d'autant plus sérieuse, qu'il y a, on doit le remarquer, plus de deux parties engagées dans la cause. Les Chrétiens accusent non seulement les Druses, mais encore les autorités Ottomanes ; les Druses à leur tour accusent les Chrétiens, et les autorités Ottomanes accusent les uns et les autres. Il est donc du devoir de ceux qui assistent à ce débat, au nom de l'Europe, de démêler soigneusement la vérité du réseau de récriminations qui l'enveloppe, afin de mieux rendre ensuite à chacun ce qui lui appartient.

L'enquête ordonnée par son Excellence pour l'éclaircissement de cette grave question simplifie déjà beaucoup la difficulté. Le tribunal condamne à la peine capitale non seulement les Chefs Druses qui se sont réfugiés dans le Hauran, mais encore les onze Chefs qui sont venus volontairement, il y a cinq mois, soumettre leur conduite à l'appréciation de l'autorité. D'autre part, il inflige aux fonctionnaires et officiers Musulmans une peine beaucoup moins sévère. La Commission a donc été d'abord conduite à se demander par quel raisonnement le tribunal est arrivé à faire peser la responsabilité d'une façon si inégale entre les deux parties principales incriminées. Lord Dufferin rappelle qu'à l'exception d'un seul de ses membres, la Commission a été d'avis que ce partage n'était pas équitable. Dans la note qu'ils ont adressée à son Excellence, les quatre Représentants de France, de Grande Bretagne, de Prusse, et de Russie ont déclaré que la responsabilité des fonctionnaires et officiers Ottomans était au moins égale à celle des Chefs Druses les plus coupables. Lord Dufferin n'hésite pas à renouveler cette déclaration et à dire que ce seul fait, que des massacres si abominables ont eu lieu dans l'étendue des territoires placés sous l'autorité de ces fonctionnaires, suffit à établir contre eux, *a priori*, la présomption de leur culpabilité. Ils sont d'avance et par position réputés coupables. C'est donc à eux qu'incombe le soin de se disculper, et si pendant la durée d'une si longue procédure, ils n'ont pas réussi à fournir la preuve certaine de leur innocence, ils sont coupables, et il y a lieu de prononcer contre eux la peine la plus rigoureuse. M. le Commissaire Britannique, n'ayant trouvé ni dans les pièces du procès, ni dans le mémoire que son Excellence vient de communiquer, aucune preuve de leur innocence, ou de l'atténuation de leur faute, persiste dans sa demande, tendante à ce que la sentence du tribunal de Beyrouth, concernant Kourchid Pacha, Tahir Pacha, et Nouri Bey, soit révisée dans le sens d'une aggravation de peine. Pour ce dernier, il ne verrait pas d'inconvénient à ce que l'arrêt de mort fût recommandé à la miséricorde du Souverain. Quant à Vassif Efendi et Ahmed Efendi, il ne croit devoir à leur sujet émettre aucun avis.

La position des Chefs Druses dans le procès est, selon Lord Dufferin, bien différente. Ce n'est point comme représentants de l'autorité, et responsables à ce titre du maintien de l'ordre, qu'ils comparaissent ; c'est comme Chefs et membres éminents de la nation qui est entrée en lutte avec celle des Maronites. Ils ne sont pas d'avance réputés coupables. Ils sont seulement prévenus, et, comme tout prévenu, réputés innocents jusqu'à preuve contraire. Ce n'est point à eux à se disculper. C'est au Ministère Public, et comme dit Lord Dufferin, à la Couronne, qu'incombe la charge de prouver tout d'abord leur culpabilité. Malgré une position si avantageuse, il y a lieu de remarquer que, tandis que les fonctionnaires Ottomans sont tous plus ou moins condamnés à la prison, il n'y a pas un Druse, parmi les onze détenus de Beyrouth, qui échappe à la peine de mort. Cette uniformité de part et d'autre semble étrange et s'explique d'autant moins que, parmi ces onze Chefs Druses, les uns sont accusés d'avoir pris personnellement part aux massacres, tandis que d'autres sont en thèse générale accusés seulement d'avoir pris part à la guerre. On est porté à croire que le tribunal de Beyrouth a jugé que la nation Druse s'étant rendue coupable d'un grand nombre d'atrocités, il fallait en tirer vengeance, en appliquant uniformément et indifféremment la peine de mort à tous ceux d'entre ses Chefs qui viendrait se remettre entre les mains de l'autorité. S'il en était ainsi, M. le Commissaire Britannique n'hésiterait point à s'élever contre un tel principe. Il croirait devoir, dans tous les cas, protester contre l'application d'un système de pénalité si exceptionnel. Mais l'instruction des procès a mis au

* I believe this is true, as far as regards the burning of houses and isolated assassinations.

grand jour certains faits dont la portée inattendue doit exercer une grande influence sur le jugement définitif de ce conflit.

Lord Dufferin avoue que, lors de son arrivée en Syrie, il était sous l'impression d'un sentiment d'indignation très naturel que lui avait inspiré le récit des atrocités commises par les Druses. Il avait autrefois, à son premier voyage, entendu parler vaguement d'un état de lutte entre les deux races, mais on lui avait laissé ignorer leur énorme disproportion numérique, et il ne savait pas que l'existence même de la nation Druse ou son expulsion de la Montagne étaient, pour ainsi dire, deux questions à l'ordre du jour chez les Chrétiens. Il a appris seulement depuis que sur toute la ligne de démarcation qui sépare le Kesrouan des districts Mixtes, une attaque contre les Druses avait été préparée et devait se terminer, telle était du moins l'attente des Maronites, par l'extermination des Druses ou leur expulsion; que des armes étaient importées en quantité extraordinaire, et des réunions belliqueuses fréquemment tenues dans plusieurs parties de la Montagne; que le pays était inondé de mandements incendiaires que l'on disait émanés des Chefs spirituels de la nation; qu'une sorte de Conseil central d'un caractère fort suspect siégeait à Beyrouth, et que, selon toute apparence, les Chrétiens des autres rites étaient appelés, sous peine de vengeance ultérieure, à prendre part à la guerre sainte; que, enfin, non content de la supériorité d'une nation de 150,000 âmes contre une tribu de 35,000, le clergé cherchait à animer le courage de ses ouailles, en leur donnant l'assurance que leurs efforts, quels qu'ils fussent, pour acquérir la possession incontestée du Liban, seraient appuyés par les Puissances de la Chrétienté.

Il n'est guère supposable que de tels desseins, ouvertement poursuivis et devenus notoires plusieurs mois avant l'événement, demeurèrent ignorés de ceux contre qui ils étaient dirigés. L'insolence et l'ambition de l'un des parties devait naturellement éveiller les instincts féroces de l'autre, et les préparatifs d'attaque commandant les mesures défensives, l'atmosphère se chargea peu à peu et l'explosion devint imminente. Des collisions isolées, provoquées on ne sait par qui, mais remarquables de part et d'autre par une cruauté traditionnelle, furent les avant-coureurs de l'orage qui allait éclater. Des corps d'hommes armés passèrent du Kesrouan dans les districts Mixtes, laissant sur leur passage l'incendie et le massacre. Les Chrétiens de Zahlé marchèrent au combat, et c'est ainsi que la guerre devint inévitable, après avoir été longtemps imminente.

Dans une telle conjoncture en effet, quel parti les Chefs de la nation Druse pouvaient-ils prendre? Demeurer tranquillement chez eux, tandis qu'on pillait et brûlait les villages de leur proches? Une telle conduite eût été aussi insensée que lâche. Les autorités Ottomanes ne paraissant point disposées à intervenir dans l'intérêt du maintien de la paix publique, il ne restait aux Druses qu'à prendre en main leur propre défense. Mais cet acte de bravoure, autorisé, commandé même par la loi naturelle, doit-il être confondu avec ces horribles massacres qui eurent lieu en dehors des limites de la Montagne Druse, en présence des garnisons Ottomanes? Si, par suite du tempérament propre aux peuples montagnards non encore civilisés, et surtout grâce à l'attitude équivoque des soldats Ottomans, d'épouvantables excès ont été commis, dira-t-on que chaque Chef qui, après avoir rassemblé ses vassaux, se prépara à la lutte et même y prit part, doit répondre de toutes les violences que ses gens auront pu commettre, et être confondu avec des incendiaires et des assassins? A Dieu ne plaise! Il est impossible de ne pas établir une distinction fondamentale entre ceux qui ne firent que courir aux armes pour leur propre défense et celle de leur nation, et ceux qui seraient convaincus d'avoir organisé le massacre et trempé leurs mains dans le sang. Lord Dufferin espère que la Commission reconnaîtra avec lui la nécessité de cette distinction, et qu'elle se gardera de frapper, comme des assassins, les hommes qui ont seulement pris part à une guerre dont l'initiative, de l'aveu de tous, revient de droit aux ennemis de la nation Druse.

M. le Commissaire de Prusse regrette vivement d'avoir à dire que, selon lui, l'instruction des procès en question n'a point été conduite avec régularité, et que l'insuffisance, pour ne pas dire la partialité, de cette procédure l'a péniblement frappé. Il y a un grand nombre de témoins dont la déposition était indiquée, rendue nécessaire pour l'éclaircissement de différents points, et qui n'ont pas été entendus. Il est souvent fait mention dans les interrogatoires de pièces, de lettres, de correspondances, qui n'ont pas été recherchées, ou du moins qui n'ont

pas été produites et jointes au dossier. Une confrontation entre les Chefs Druses et quelques-uns des agents de l'autorité Ottomane était nécessaire; elle n'a pas eu lieu.

Toutes ces observations ont conduit M. de Rehfuës à penser qu'une instruction supplémentaire serait utile, et qu'il faudrait même la confier à un jurisconsulte Européen; mais, eu égard aux retards qu'une telle mesure entraînerait et à l'incertitude du résultat final, il ne croit pas devoir insister sur cette idée, quelque juste qu'elle lui paraisse.

Pour arriver à se former une opinion sur ce procès et sur la culpabilité des différents accusés, il a donc dû, lui aussi, chercher en dehors des documents, des éléments de conviction, et il n'hésite pas à déclarer, comme il l'a déjà fait concurremment avec ses collègues de France, de Grande Bretagne, et de Russie, que la responsabilité des fonctionnaires et officiers Ottomans demeure pleine et entière. De quelque côté que vint le signal du désordre et la provocation, avec les forces dont ils disposaient et au péril même de leur vie, les représentants de l'autorité, chargés de veiller au maintien de l'ordre, devaient s'interposer entre les combattants, essayer au moins d'arrêter un mal qu'ils n'avaient pas su prévenir. Ils ne l'ont pas fait. On ne peut citer, on ne cite de leur part aucun effort sérieux. Ils sont donc responsables au premier Chef, et méritent de subir les conséquences de leur coupable conduite. Le Gouverneur de Sayda eût-il offert vingt fois sa démission avant les événements, tant qu'il était Gouverneur, il se devait tout entier, sans réserve, aux devoirs de sa position. Il n'y a donc aucune circonstance atténuante qui puisse être invoquée en sa faveur. Tahir Pacha mérite la mort à un égal titre, car il commandait en chef des troupes à Deir-el-Kamar qu'il a livré aux massacres; et Nouri Bey a forfait aux lois de l'honneur, en n'exécutant point l'ordre formel qui lui avait été donné d'occuper Zahlé. Vassfy Efendi a prouvé après les événements, par le meurtre juridique d'un Chrétien, qu'il était capable d'y avoir trempé, et sa part de responsabilité dans les événements est telle qu'il mérite la peine de mort. La sentence rendue contre Ahmed Efendi devrait aussi être révisée dans le sens d'une aggravation.

M. le Commissaire d'Autriche a fait une double étude de cette affaire. Il a examiné les dossiers avec soin, et il a été le témoin des événements. Ces deux études ont tour à tour contribué à faire naître en lui l'opinion qu'il a exprimée dans sa note particulière, savoir, que les désordres qui ont eu lieu dans la Montagne doivent être considérés comme une guerre de peuple à peuple, et que les fonctionnaires et officiers Ottomans ont fait ce qui était en leur pouvoir pour l'empêcher d'éclater.

Dans les districts du Nord, dans le Kesrouan, comme dans le Meten et les districts du Sud, l'abus des droits féodaux dont les seigneurs ou Mokatajdjis étaient en possession, avait soulevé dans les classes inférieures de la population un vif mécontentement.* Dans les districts de la partie septentrionale, où les Mokatajdjis étaient les coreligionnaires des Fellahs, l'insurrection, quand elle eut lieu, conserva le caractère d'une guerre civile. Dans les districts où les populations Chrétiennes étaient soumises à des Mokatajdjis Druses, la difficulté politique et sociale prit naturellement le caractère d'une lutte militaire entre deux nationalités. Au fond, le principe des troubles était le même dans les deux Caimacanies. Mais, dans le Sud, à ce principe il se joignait d'autres circonstances qui aggravèrent singulièrement le mal et amenèrent de véritables désastres. L'organisation des Druses, leur esprit de solidarité, la facilité pour les Chefs de rassembler en un moment autour d'eux leurs vassaux, permirent à cette nation, la moins nombreuse, de se défendre avec succès contre l'autre, et même de remporter facilement sur elle une victoire qui fut souillée par de déplorables excès. M. le Commissaire d'Autriche ajoute que ces atrocités ont soulevé en Europe une douloureuse émotion, et il ne croit pas se tromper en disant que ce n'est point le fait de la guerre lui-même que l'Europe a blâmé, car en Europe il y a aussi des guerres qui coûtent la vie à beaucoup d'hommes. Ce sont les assassinats, c'est l'incendie, le pillage effréné que l'opinion publique a flétris et qu'elle voudrait voir réprimer. Or, dans les pièces du procès des accusés de Beyrouth, M. de Weckbecker a vainement cherché la preuve que les accusés, tant Ottomans que Sheiks Druses, aient été les instigateurs du massacre, ou qu'ils y aient pris personnellement part, sauf deux, Mouhieddin Chibli et Bechir Meri, au sujet desquels il a déjà fait des réserves dans sa note particulière. Il ne peut que persister dans l'opinion

* There is a good deal of truth in what M. de Weckbecker says about the anti-aristocratic character of the movement.

générale qu'il a exprimée, savoir, que le Tribunal de Beyrouth n'a point tenu suffisamment compte, à ses yeux, du caractère qu'il vient d'assigner à la lutte entre Druses et Maronites. Quant aux fonctionnaires et officiers Ottomans, M. de Weckbecker a été à même de constater qu'ils ont, et cela est vrai surtout de Kourchid Pacha, fait appel à tous les moyens qu'ils avaient à leur disposition pour prévenir la guerre civile. Mais les forces matérielles étaient insuffisantes, et leur force morale s'est trouvée impuissante. Kourchid Pacha avait réuni le Corps Consulaire, et lui avait dit : Je n'ai d'influence que sur les Druses et les Musulmans ; vous en avez sur les Chrétiens ; retenez les uns, je retiendrai les autres. Conformément à l'invitation qui lui était adressée par Kourchid Pacha, M. de Weckbecker, en sa qualité de Consul-Général d'Autriche, conjointement avec son collègue M. le Comte Bentivoglio, engagea Monseigneur Tobie,* l'Evêque Maronite le plus influent et le plus populaire, à se rendre dans le Kesrouan pour y faire entendre une parole de paix. L'Evêque se rendit avec empressement à ce Conseil. Il s'efforça de calmer les esprits, et adressa peu de jours après aux Consuls des lettres, dans lesquelles il exprimait sa reconnaissance pour la démarche sage et bienveillante que le Gouverneur-Général avait faite auprès d'eux, afin de rendre possible la réconciliation des deux partis. Le Commissaire d'Autriche peut présenter cette lettre à la Commission. Malheureusement les efforts de ce prélat demeurèrent impuissants. Les Chrétiens ne voulurent pas se retirer avant que les Druses n'eussent mis bas les armes, et les Druses de leur côté refusèrent de se disperser avant que les Chrétiens ne fussent rentrés chez eux. Ainsi Kourchid Pacha n'a pas réussi à maintenir les Druses, non plus que les Consuls n'avaient réussi à calmer les Chrétiens ; néanmoins on peut dire que, eu égard au petit nombre de troupes dont il disposait, il a mis sa responsabilité à couvert par la manière dont il s'est conduit.

M. le Commissaire Français trouve dans les propres paroles que M. de Weckbecker vient de prononcer, la justification d'une motion qu'il a déjà faite dans une réunion particulière des cinq Commissaires,† et tendante à ce que les Chefs Druses étant rigoureusement frappés, les coupables vulgaires, détenus et condamnés à mort à Mokhtara, soient après cette condamnation l'objet d'une commutation de peine. L'organisation de la nation Druse à laquelle M. le Commissaire d'Autriche a fait allusion, l'influence énorme, presque absolue, des principaux Chefs sur le reste de la nation, prouvent d'une manière certaine que ce sont eux qui doivent surtout porter la responsabilité des événements, et qu'il n'est point indispensable à l'œuvre de répression que ceux qui n'ont été que des instruments soient punis de la peine de mort. M. Bécclard donne lecture de la note dans laquelle il a développé cette idée, et demande qu'elle soit annexée au procès-verbal (Annexe 4). M. le Commissaire Français rappelle à ce propos que son Excellence Fuad Pacha avait promis à la Commission de faire de nouvelles recherches pour arriver à prononcer un plus grand nombre de condamnations à Mokhtara, conformément au vœu émis par la Commission. Si ces recherches ont amené un résultat, il prie son Excellence de vouloir bien le faire connaître. Il y aurait lieu dans ce cas d'étendre à ces nouveaux condamnés, comme aux vingt premiers, la faveur d'une commutation de peine, mais seulement après que leur condamnation aurait été prononcée et publiée avec solennité. Ce qu'il a en vue, en faisant cette proposition, c'est d'éviter l'effusion du sang, et de favoriser, par cette mesure de clémence, la réconciliation si désirable des Druses avec les Maronites. Il espère que ce double objet sera également pris en considération par tous ses collègues.

Lord Dufferin s'associe au vœu exprimé par M. Bécclard.

Fuad Pacha répond à la question qui vient de lui être posée au sujet des condamnés de Mokhtara. Après de nouvelles investigations, il est arrivé à un chiffre total de cinquante-huit condamnations à mort, auxquelles il y aurait lieu d'adjoindre encore quelques individus, récemment arrêtés à Damas, et qui avaient pris part aux désordres de la Montagne. On pourrait appliquer à tous ces gens là le bénéfice d'une commutation de peine.

M. de Rehues adhère à la proposition de M. Bécclard, mais à une condition toutefois ; c'est que cette commutation de peine pour la masse des criminels

* It was at this interview that Bishop Tobie boasted that whatever he might have said, he had never written anything to compromise himself.

† This motion of M. Bécclard's was the result of M. Thouvenel's communication on the subject of "the holocaust." It is to be regretted, however, that the result of the French Minister's humane interference should endanger the heads of persons far less deserving of punishment than the butchers on whose behalf he wrote.

de Mokhtara n'entraînera point de mesure analogue en faveur des Cheiks détenus à Beyrouth.

M. Bécclard fait observer que, bien loin d'entraîner cette conséquence, elle l'exclue. On n'épargnerait les coupables d'ordre secondaire que parce que la responsabilité, et par conséquent la peine de premier ordre, pèseraient sur les Chefs. Ces deux idées sont si étroitement liées, à ses yeux, qu'elles ne peuvent être séparées.*

M. le Commissaire de Russie s'associe de grand cœur à l'idée de clémence qui a dicté la proposition de M. Bécclard, avec cette réserve qu'elle ne puisse être prise par les uns comme un encouragement, ni par les autres comme un déni de justice. Il reconnaît la nécessité de confirmer les sentences des tribunaux contre quelques-uns des Druses les plus coupables ; il voudrait seulement que l'on mit un discernement tout particulier dans leur désignation. M. le Commissaire de France croit devoir provoquer la peine capitale à l'égard de la presque totalité des Chefs Druses condamnés à Beyrouth, comme appartenant à la catégorie des Chefs, et il réclame une commutation de peine pour les condamnés de Mokhtara qu'il considère tous comme des assassins obscurs. Cette classification ne paraît pas entièrement exacte. Parmi les condamnés de Mokhtara, il se trouve des membres de la famille Arian, une des plus considérables de l'Anti-Liban,† et des Chefs de bandes, convaincus d'avoir pris part aux massacres. Par contre, sur les onze condamnés de Beyrouth, il y a des individus de la basse classe, et des Chefs de second ordre qui sont seulement convaincus d'avoir parcouru le pays à la tête de leurs bandes les armes à la main, mais sans qu'il soit prouvé que ces bandes aient commis des meurtres.‡ En conséquence M. le Commissaire Russe est d'avis que le principe de la peine de mort à Beyrouth, et celui de la commutation à Mokhtara, ne doivent être appliqués ni l'un ni l'autre rigoureusement. Il y aurait lieu peut-être, selon lui, de condamner à des peines graduées quelques détenus de Beyrouth, tels que Ellad Talhouk, Essad Amad, Cassim Noked, et l'Emir Cassim Roslan, et à exécuter la condamnation à mort contre ceux d'entre les détenus de Mokhtara qui, appartenant ou non à des familles influentes, seraient convaincus d'avoir conduit des bandes aux massacres.§ L'amendement proposé par M. le Commissaire Russe à la motion de M. Bécclard, ne soulevant aucune objection, paraît de nature à être adopté. Lord Dufferin fait observer toutefois que la clémence en faveur des condamnés de Mokhtara, convaincus pour la plupart d'assassinat, ne saurait servir à ses yeux de justification à une aggravation de peine contre une autre classe d'accusés dont la culpabilité doit être considérée isolément.

M. le Commissaire d'Autriche appuie la proposition de M. Bécclard, relativement aux condamnés de Mokhtara, mais en réservant expressément l'opinion qu'il a formulée dans sa note particulière touchant les onze accusés de Beyrouth. Il considère en général la clémence comme le moyen le plus propre à rétablir l'union entre deux peuples destinés à vivre l'un à côté de l'autre sur un même territoire.

La séance est levée à six heures et demie.

(Suivent les signatures.)

Annex 1.

Beyrouth, le 23 Février, 1861.

Les Soussignés, après avoir pris connaissance des pièces du procès des fonctionnaires Ottomans et des Cheiks Druses détenus à Beyrouth, croient devoir se borner à constater que, de ces pièces, il ne résulte aucune circonstance atténuante de nature à établir avec certitude que les fonctionnaires et officiers Ottomans ne sont pas responsables en principe des événements qui ont ensanglanté la Montagne et amené le massacre de 6,000 Chrétiens. Dans la pensée des quatre Commissaires de France, de Grande Bretagne, de Prusse, et de Russie, cette responsabilité continue, ils ont regret à le dire, à peser sur les agents de

* This does not appear just. Amongst those condemned at Mokhtara are many Sheikhs of as great influence as the Chiefs at Beyrouth, and I am afraid that it is a political object that dictates this language, rather than abstract considerations of justice.

† This is quite true.

‡ As is also this observation.

§ I quite agree with M. Novikow in this.

l'autorité Ottomane au moins autant que sur les plus coupables des Cheiks Druses, et la différence des châtimens infligés aux uns et aux autres ne trouve pas, à leurs yeux, sa justification suffisante dans les pièces du procès soumises à leur examen.

En conséquence les Soussignés ont l'honneur d'inviter son Excellence Fuad Pacha à suppléer, par sa propre initiative et dans le légitime exercice des pleins-pouvoirs dont il est muni, en consultant à la fois les inspirations de sa conscience et les nécessités aussi impérieuses qu'urgentes de la justice, à ce qu'il y a d'incomplet dans l'instruction et d'inéquitable dans les sentences du tribunal de Beyrouth, et à terminer le plus promptement possible cette œuvre de répression dont les lenteurs ont entravé depuis six mois le rétablissement de l'ordre dans le Liban.

(Signé)

L. BECLARD.

DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.
DE REHFUES.
NOVIKOW.

Annex 2.

Beyrouth, le 23 Février, 1861.

Le Soussigné a lu avec attention les dossiers que son Excellence Fuad Pacha a soumis à l'examen de la Commission Internationale.

Il voit avec une vive satisfaction que les organes du Gouvernement Impérial à Beyrouth ne sont pas complices des atrocités commises envers les Chrétiens du Liban. Ils paraissent au contraire s'être efforcés de réprimer les désordres, et s'ils n'y ont pas réussi, c'est qu'ils n'avaient à leur disposition que des forces militaires insuffisantes, et qu'ils furent promptement débordés par les événements. Le Tribunal Extraordinaire de Beyrouth, en proposant de les frapper d'une peine rigoureuse, a eu sans doute en vue un genre de culpabilité que l'examen attentif des pièces du procès ne fait pas apercevoir.

Quant aux Chefs Druses, le Soussigné est d'avis que le Tribunal n'a pas pris suffisamment en considération le caractère particulier de la lutte entre Druses et Chrétiens. Ce n'était pas un acte de rébellion de la part des Cheiks Druses contre l'autorité du Souverain, c'était une guerre civile entre deux populations rivales qui, en se disputant un territoire, se sont défendues ou ont pris l'offensive tour à tour et selon l'occurrence.

La Commission, loin de méconnaître le caractère de la lutte, avait pris soin de le constater, pour ainsi dire, elle-même, en établissant dans sa dixième séance du 24 Novembre, 1860, trois catégories de coupables qu'elle jugeait passibles de la peine de mort, savoir :

Les instigateurs des massacres ;

Les chefs des bandes des assassins et des incendiaires ;

Et les assassins les plus sanguinaires, c'est-à-dire, les individus ayant pris une part personnelle aux massacres, sans distinction s'ils sont des chefs de la nation ou de simples administrés.

Or, le Soussigné ne trouve pas que les Druses détenus à Beyrouth et condamnés par le Tribunal Extraordinaire de Beyrouth, à l'exception peut-être de deux, savoir, Mehmeddin Chibli et Bechir Meri, puissent être compris dans l'une ou l'autre de ces trois catégories. Il faudrait, selon lui, faire reviser la sentence des autres condamnés contre lesquels les preuves à charge ne lui paraissent pas tout-à-fait convaincantes.

Le Soussigné, &c.

(Signé)

DE WECKBECKER.

A son Excellence Fuad Pacha,
&c. &c. &c.

Annex 3.

Fuad Pacha a pris en sérieuse considération la communication collective que MM. les Commissaires de France, de la Grande Bretagne, de Prusse, et de Russie, lui ont adressée au sujet du procès des fonctionnaires Ottomans et des Cheiks Druses, donc les pièces de procédure leur avaient été communiquées. MM. les Commissaires des quatre Puissances, voyant une différence entre les

peines auxquelles le Tribunal Extraordinaire de Beyrouth condamne les agents de l'autorité Ottomane et les Chefs Druses, et considérant que la responsabilité des premiers dans les événements de la Montagne est aussi grande que la culpabilité des derniers, constatent dans leur opinion la nécessité pour le Plénipotentiaire du Sultan de suppléer, par son initiative et d'après l'inspiration de sa conscience et l'exigence de la justice, à ce qu'il y a d'incomplet dans l'instruction et d'inéquitable dans les sentences de ce Tribunal.

Fuad Pacha, appelé par les pouvoirs que le Sultan son auguste Maître lui a confiés, à sanctionner les sentences que les Tribunaux Extraordinaires donneraient, conformément aux dispositions des lois existantes de l'Empire, a cru de son devoir impérieux de laisser une liberté d'action aux Tribunaux qu'il avait institués d'office, et se conformant aux attributions du pouvoir exécutif qu'il représente en Syrie, il s'était abstenu de se constituer soit en défenseur, soit en accusateur à l'égard des individus que la justice poursuivait. Comme la communication de MM. les Commissaires des quatre Puissances invite aujourd'hui le Plénipotentiaire Ottoman à se mettre au-dessus d'un Tribunal, et à rendre un jugement suprême par sa propre initiative, il se trouve dans la nécessité d'exprimer ici les inspirations de sa conscience, d'après lesquelles il doit non pas faire appliquer une sentence, mais rendre, pour ainsi dire, un jugement en dernier ressort.

Il faudra d'abord établir la différence qu'il y a entre les crimes commis dans la ville de Damas, et les événements qui ont ensanglanté la Montagne. Le premier est un soulèvement d'une partie de la population d'une ville contre une autre, sans cause et sans provocation. C'était un crime prévu explicitement par le Code de l'Empire. Une peine sévère fut infligée à cette population, et ceux parmi les fonctionnaires qui n'ont pas su remplir leurs devoirs, en protégeant les sujets de leur Souverain, ont été frappés de la plus sévère punition.

Quant aux événements de la Montagne, ils diffèrent, de l'avis et de l'aveu de tout le monde, dans leur cause et dans leur forme de ceux de la ville de Damas, quoique le caractère de ces événements ne soit pas légalement établi.* Les atrocités commises contre les Chrétiens, et le torrent de sang humain qui a été versé, ont produit naturellement une telle émotion que sous son empire on ne voit, pour ainsi dire, que le corps du délit, sans entrer dans la recherche des causes qui ont produit ces méfaits. Mais pour bien éclairer la justice, il aurait fallu du prime abord, et avant d'entrer dans des procès individuels, prescrire la nature et le caractère de ces événements. C'est sous cette inspiration que le Plénipotentiaire Ottoman avait énoncé, lors de l'ouverture de la Commission Européenne, en répondant aux quatre points qui avaient été soumis à son examen, l'idée que la Commission Européenne doit, comme un Tribunal, juger d'abord non pas les individus dont le jugement appartient à leur autorité légitime, mais les événements dans leur cause et leur forme. Ce procès général et politique aurait fourni au jugement individuel des matières d'éclaircissement, si nécessaires pour le rendre aussi juste qu'impartial.

Le Plénipotentiaire Ottoman ayant été obligé de donner une autre direction à ce procès, c'est-à-dire, d'ordonner des poursuites individuelles, le Tribunal Extraordinaire de Beyrouth n'a cherché que les individus auxquels les peines indiquées dans les Articles 56 et 57 du Code Pénal pourraient être appliquées. D'après ces articles les individus qui sont passibles de la peine capitale sont :

1. Ceux qui organisent et dirigent un complot dans le but de soulever une partie de la population de l'Empire contre l'autre.†

2. Ceux qui exercent, dans une bande organisée pour un complot, un commandement.

3. Ceux qui, faisant partie d'une bande armée, commettent des assassinats. Le Tribunal Extraordinaire, conformément au rôle qui lui a été assigné, n'a fait qu'instruire le procès des individus qui ont été accusés de ces trois degrés de crimes, sans entrer dans aucune considération politique. De cette procédure il a constaté ces crimes sans pouvoir chercher dans leurs causes des circonstances atténuantes ou aggravantes, et il a donné sa sentence pour l'application des peines prévues par la loi.

Quant aux agents de l'autorité, aucun indice ne venant constater leur participation aux crimes de ceux qui ont été accusés comme gravement compromis dans ces événements, à trois degrés de culpabilité cités plus haut, le

* True.

† If there was any conspiracy, it was a Christian conspiracy.

Tribunal les a condamnés non pas comme coupables de ces mêmes crimes, mais pour avoir manqué aux devoirs qu'ils étaient tenus à remplir comme Agents du Gouvernement. C'est à une peine disciplinaire qu'on a dû les condamner, et cette condamnation a été prononcée dans toute la sévérité de la loi par l'application de peines qui viennent immédiatement après la peine capitale, et qui comportent la mort civile. Telle est la différence qui existe entre les crimes que les Druses ont commis et la culpabilité des agents de l'autorité; telle est la graduation des peines qui leur ont été appliquées.

Si l'on cherche aujourd'hui des circonstances atténuantes pour les uns, ou des circonstances aggravantes pour les autres, il faudra faire ce procès des événements que le Plénipotentiaire Ottoman avait en son temps indiqué comme base de cette procédure extraordinaire, et puisqu'on semble demander une aggravation de peine pour les agents de l'autorité, ou une explication sur les circonstances atténuantes qui ont engagé le Tribunal Extraordinaire à leur appliquer une peine inférieure à celle qui a été appliquée aux Chefs Druses, on devra remonter aux circonstances qui ont entouré la situation des fonctionnaires Ottomans à l'époque où ils exerçaient leurs fonctions. On sait qu'aucun agent de l'autorité locale n'a été compromis dans les événements de la Montagne comme complice ni instigateur, et les accusations ne peuvent être portées que contre leurs actes comme Agents du Gouvernement. Aussi est-ce sous le point de vue de leur responsabilité que le degré de leur culpabilité doit être constaté. Dans ce cas deux questions se présentent à l'esprit: avaient-ils tous les moyens de prévenir le mal? étaient-ils en mesure d'empêcher un conflit entre les deux parties?

Pour répondre à la première de ces deux questions, il faut se rendre compte de la situation politique dans laquelle se trouvait la Montagne. Les deux populations Maronite et Druse, placées sous un régime exceptionnel, étaient soustraites à l'action directe de l'autorité. Sa voix n'a été entendue nulle part, et une partie de la Montagne s'est mise en opposition directe non seulement avec le Gouvernement de Beyrouth, mais avec l'autorité même qui régit la Montagne Chrétienne. Une lettre d'un des Chefs de cette partie de la Montagne,* dont tout le monde connaît la teneur, prouve jusqu'à quel point l'autorité du Gouvernement a été méconnue. Les Druses, plus soumis en apparence, n'étaient pas en réalité moins désobéissants que les Chrétiens. La Montagne, théâtre de crimes isolés qui restaient toujours impunis, était devenu le refuge non seulement des malfaiteurs des autres parties de la province, mais même de ceux qui voulaient échapper aux procès ordinaires qu'on leur intentait. Les plaintes, trop souvent répétées, des agents étrangers de déni de justice qui se pratiquaient ici, prouvent d'une manière évidente la situation anormale dans laquelle se trouvait le pays. Les Maronites et les Druses, se considérant chacun appuyé, il est temps de le dire, par des influences étrangères, étaient en opposition plus ou moins manifeste contre l'autorité souveraine qui n'avait aucun moyen d'empêcher les funestes conséquences de cette guerre sourde qui existait entre les deux populations, également mues par leur haine et leurs passions. Fallait-il donner des ordres ou des conseils? ni les uns ni les autres n'étaient écoutés. Fallait-il employer la force ou la punition? l'une et l'autre restaient sans effet. Le Kesrouan était devenu depuis longtemps le foyer de cette opposition et d'une grande agitation. L'autorité locale, ne pouvant agir de son chef, avait soumis à la Sublime Porte la nécessité d'exercer une intervention, devenue urgente pour prévenir le mal qu'elle prévoyait; mais le Gouvernement du Sultan, déjà en butte à tant de récriminations, a préféré plutôt tolérer cette insubordination que d'être taxé de l'idée de frapper les Chrétiens. L'autorité locale, réduite donc au rôle de simple spectatrice, voyait sans pouvoir et sans force venir les événements, sans avoir les moyens, découlant de la liberté d'action, de les empêcher. Comme Ministre des Affaires Etrangères, Fuad Pacha croit remplir un devoir de loyauté, en constatant ici que Kourchid Pacha, en présence d'une situation si tendue et des grandes difficultés qui l'entouraient, et dont la responsabilité devait peser sur lui, a offert à trois fois sa démission, que la Sublime Porte n'a pas acceptée.

Après cet exposé sommaire de la situation dans laquelle se trouvait l'autorité locale, on doit convenir qu'il lui était impossible de prévenir un mal

* A copy of this letter I inclose. The writer is a blacksmith, who, aided by Bishop Tobia, overthrew, some time ago, the feudal aristocracy in a part of the Kesrouan, and subsequently, in May last year, directed the first military movement against the Druses.

dont on veut faire peser sur elle toute la grande responsabilité; on n'est responsable que lorsqu'on a la liberté d'action pour remplir son devoir.

En passant à la question de savoir si l'autorité locale se trouvait en mesure d'empêcher un conflit entre les deux populations, il n'est pas à douter que cette même position qui a empêché l'autorité de prévenir le mal, n'ait paralysé aussi toute son action, lorsque les deux parties adverses sont venues aux mains. C'est à l'autorité locale qu'était dévolu incontestablement le devoir d'intervenir pour repousser les premiers agresseurs et protéger ceux qui étaient attaqués; mais aurait-elle pu le faire dans la situation où elle se trouvait? Les faits seuls répondront à cette question, et c'est ici qu'on doit préciser le caractère et la nature des événements qui ont ensanglanté la Montagne.

Une enquête minutieuse peut prouver aujourd'hui que les Maronites et les Druses ont été tour à tour agresseurs ou attaqués. Ce sont les Maronites qui se sont soulevés en masse contre les Druses. Il sera prouvé peut-être que ce soulèvement des Chrétiens ne s'est produit que par suite des vexations que les Druses exerçaient sur eux, en commettant sur leurs coreligionnaires des crimes isolés. Le signal de la guerre est donné par les premiers. Une bande armée de Chrétiens était venue la première passer de la Caimacanie Chrétienne dans celle des Druses.* Ce fut le début de cette guerre civile qui a fini par tant de calamités. Les habitants Chrétiens de Djezin attaquèrent les premiers les villages des Druses leurs voisins, mais ayant subi une défaite, ils furent envahis par les Druses, qui commirent les crimes dont ils sont accusés. A Hasbeya et à Rachéya les Chrétiens commencèrent à attaquer les Druses, et ils les chassèrent de leurs maisons. A Sayda même Youssuf Moubéiz, un Chef Chrétien, est allé à la rencontre d'un Chef Druse, nommé Cassim Youssuf, pour se venger des crimes isolés commis de la part des Druses sur les Chrétiens.

Qu'aurait dû faire dans cette circonstance l'autorité locale? Si elle avait empêché les Chrétiens de vive force, elle aurait été encore plus gravement accusée de partialité pour les Druses, considérés aujourd'hui comme provocateurs par leurs vexations. Si au contraire elle avait commencé par châtier les Druses, on aurait imputé à l'autorité de la partialité dans un autre sens, vu qu'on aurait considéré ces derniers comme attaqués par les Chrétiens.

Cette situation était embarrassante non seulement pour l'autorité locale, mais pour le Gouvernement Central même. La Porte, voulant toujours couvrir d'une égale protection ces deux populations et démontrer toute l'impartialité de sa politique, avait donné l'ordre à l'autorité locale de se placer entre les deux parties pour empêcher leur collision et les agressions de part et d'autre, mais en évitant toutefois tout ce qui pourrait donner lieu à une idée de partielle intervention, et c'est seulement lorsque le Gouvernement du Sultan a été surpris par une perpétration d'atrocités sans exemple de la part des Druses qu'il s'est empressé de donner l'ordre de les châtier.

Voilà la position dans laquelle se trouvait l'autorité locale, lorsque cette guerre éclata entre les deux populations, et il faut ajouter une circonstance qui n'est pas moins forte pour servir à la décharge des Agents de cette autorité. Depuis deux ans les embarras suscités de la part de la Serbie et du Monténégro, en Bulgarie, en Bosnie, et en Herzégovine, avaient attiré toute l'attention et toutes les forces du Gouvernement vers ces provinces. Obligée de faire une concentration de troupes en Roumélie, la Sublime Porte a été, à son grand regret, forcée de dégarnir la plupart des provinces d'Asie, de sorte que, lorsque les événements éclatèrent, l'effectif de l'armée de la Syrie ne comptait pas plus de 5,000 hommes, et dans la Province de Sayda il ne se trouvait pas plus de 2,000 soldats. C'était cette force, disséminée sur une si grande étendue, qui était appelée à empêcher la guerre civile sur une Montagne dont la configuration a toujours contribué à soutenir l'opposition directe de ses populations contre l'autorité.

Telles sont les considérations qui impliquent en faveur des Agents de l'autorité des circonstances atténuant la peine qui est infligée aux coupables de crimes prévus par la loi. Une conduite plus habile et plus énergique de ces Agents aurait pu diminuer les charges de leur responsabilité, mais elle n'aurait pas arrêté l'accomplissement de si grands malheurs. L'autorité n'avait ni assez de pouvoir pour les prévenir, ni assez de force pour s'y opposer. Les officiers qui se sont trouvés à Hasbeya, à Rachéya, à Deir-el-Kamar, et à Beiteddin,

* Then why condemn eleven Druse Chiefs to death, in addition to those who have fled to the Hauran?

n'ayant pas rempli leurs devoirs, en défendant les Chrétiens qui s'étaient réfugiés sous la protection de leurs armes, ont été jugés et condamnés comme coupables de trahison. Les deux premiers sont déjà exécutés, et les deux derniers subiront immédiatement leur peine.

Le Plénipotentiaire Ottoman, étant désireux plus que personne de finir un moment plutôt cette partie si pénible de sa tâche, espère qu'une entente qui ne manquera de s'établir entre les membres de la Commission le mettra à même d'achever l'œuvre de justice qui traîne depuis trop longtemps, contrairement à sa volonté.

Beyrouth, le 7 Février, 1861.

Annex 4.

Note Particulière présentée par M. le Commissaire Français.

Le Commissaire Français,* après avoir fait une étude attentive des documents communiqués à la Commission par son Excellence Fuad Pacha, déclare que dans son opinion, tandis que les condamnations capitales prononcées contre les Chefs Druses, détenus à Beyrouth, sont pleinement motivées et justifiées, rien n'explique au contraire l'indulgence relative dont le Tribunal a fait preuve envers l'ex-Gouverneur Kourchid Pacha, le Général Tahir Pacha, le Colonel Noury Bey, le Kiahia Vasyf Efendi, et l'employé Ahmed Efendi. La responsabilité la plus entière pèse toujours à ses yeux sur les fonctionnaires ou officiers Ottomans dont il vient de citer les noms, et il ne voit pas pourquoi ces derniers, instigateurs ou complices des massacres dont le Liban a été le théâtre, ne seraient pas aussi sévèrement punis que ceux qui ont toléré ou provoqué les mêmes crimes à Damas. Mais, tout en réclamant contre eux une aggravation de peine que lui paraît d'accord avec les exigences de la justice, le Commissaire Français croit devoir poser à ses collègues la question de savoir si, exercée dans de telles limites, c'est-à-dire, appliquée avec la dernière rigueur aux principaux accusés, tant Musulmans que Druses, la répression, en ce qui constitue son caractère le plus terrible, n'aurait pas atteint pleinement le résultat auquel il était permis de prétendre. Sa conscience qu'il a d'abord interrogée sur ce point, lui dit que l'humanité, pour venger les outrages qu'elle a subis, n'admet pas l'emploi immodéré de ces mêmes armes dont on s'est servi contre elle. D'après ce principe, le sang des plus grands coupables devrait être considéré comme une expiation suffisante. Quant aux autres accusés, si leur conduite est également odieuse, leur responsabilité est moindre. Il y aurait donc lieu de les recommander à la clémence du Plénipotentiaire Ottoman. En agissant ainsi, la Commission ne devrait pas craindre de se mettre en contradiction avec elle-même. Cette contradiction d'ailleurs n'existerait pas. La Commission a pu vouloir, et elle a voulu en effet qu'une flétrissure méritée fût infligée à un nombre plus ou moins grand d'accusés parmi ceux que le Tribunal de Mokhtarah avait classés en diverses catégories; il lui est certainement loisible aujourd'hui, une fois cette satisfaction obtenue, d'intervenir, au nom de l'Europe civilisée, en faveur d'individus, obscurs pour la plupart, qui n'ont été que les instruments de passions détestables, qu'une différence soit faite entre les assassins qui ont frappé sans discernement et ceux qui, au lieu d'empêcher le mal, l'ont favorisé, soit par une impulsion déterminante, soit par une lâche inaction. Ceux-ci pouvaient arrêter le bras des assassins: ils l'ont en quelque sorte dirigé. A eux la responsabilité des crimes commis; aux autres une punition moindre, quoique proportionnée à leurs forfaits, une punition qui, en les séquestrant du reste de la société, leur permette de se purifier par le repentir. Les nécessités inhérentes au rétablissement de l'ordre et de la sécurité dans la Montagne pourraient ainsi se concilier avec les conseils de la clémence.

* The French Commissioner here proposes to let off all those condemned at Mokhtara, if the eleven Chiefs at Beyrouth are put to death. He is always anxious to diminish the rank of the persons condemned at Mokhtara; but the fact is, many of them are persons of great influence and position among their nation.

Inclosure 3 in No. 523.

Protocol of the Twenty-third Meeting of the Syrian Commission, held at Beyrouth, February 28, 1861.

LE vingt-huit Février, mil huit cent soixante-un, tous les Commissaires étant réunis à Beyrouth sous la présidence de Fuad Pacha, la séance est ouverte à midi.

MM. les Commissaires reviennent sur le sujet qu'ils ont traité la veille. Ils l'examinent en détail, et cherchent à établir, chacun tour à tour, selon les lumières qu'ils possèdent, le degré de culpabilité des différents accusés. Après l'exposé développé de toutes les opinions contradictoires, son Excellence le Plénipotentiaire Ottoman résume le débat, et rend compte à la Commission de l'embarras où il se trouve par suite des divergences qui se sont produites dans son sein.

M. de Weckbecker, dit-il, demande que je révisé dans le sens d'un acquittement les sentences prononcées par le Tribunal de Beyrouth contre les fonctionnaires Ottomans, tandis que les quatre autres Commissaires demandent qu'un châtiment sévère leur soit infligé. Une divergence d'opinion radicale existe d'ailleurs entre ces quatre Commissaires au sujet des Druses; et même sur le premier point concernant les agents de l'autorité, ils diffèrent d'avis sur le degré de culpabilité, et par conséquent sur le degré de la peine qu'il faut appliquer.

M. le Commissaire de France demande que la peine de mort soit infligée aux cinq fonctionnaires, Ottomans incriminés; M. le Commissaire de Prusse aux quatre premiers; M. le Commissaire d'Angleterre et celui de Russie à trois seulement. Encore M. le Commissaire Britannique admet-il que le troisième, Noury Bey, puisse être recommandé à la bienveillance miséricordieuse du Sultan. Lord Dufferin et M. Novikow ne demandent pour le quatrième et le cinquième qu'une aggravation de peine d'un degré.* Sur la première question, relative aux agents de l'autorité Ottomane, Fuad Pacha, s'il veut prendre en considération l'avis exprimé par les Commissaires, se trouve donc en présence d'au moins trois opinions.

Quant aux Chefs Druses, les avis sont encore plus contradictoires. Les Représentants de l'Autriche et de l'Angleterre demandent la révision du procès pour six accusés dans le sens de l'acquittement, une mitigation de peine pour trois, et la confirmation du jugement pour deux seulement, Mouhieddin Chibli et Bechir Meri. M. de Rehfués et M. Béclard demandent la confirmation de toutes les sentences, sauf pour Hussein Talhouk et Ali Said, en faveur desquels ils admettent une commutation de peine. M. Novikow, tenant pour ainsi dire une position intermédiaire, réclame une diminution de peine pour Hussein Talhouk, et s'abstient de se prononcer sur Essad Talhouk, Cassim Nekid, Essad Amed, et Emin Mohammed Cassim Roslan.†

Il est clair que toutes ces opinions, également respectables aux yeux de son Excellence le Commissaire Ottoman, ne peuvent être en même temps satisfaisantes. Comme Représentant du pouvoir exécutif du Sultan, il a mission de donner force exécutoire aux sentences rendues par le Tribunal conformément à la loi. Comme membre de la Commission il a le droit de se former une opinion personnelle sur ces sentences. S'il use de ses pleins-pouvoirs pour réviser les sentences, il doit rendre compte à son Gouvernement du motif de sa résolution. Il aura obéi à l'inspiration de sa conscience ou bien à une nécessité de l'ordre politique. Or, en ce qui concerne les fonctionnaires Ottomans et Kourchid Pacha notamment, qui, d'après les renseignements fournis dans la séance d'hier par M. de Weckbecker, a fait appel au Corps Consulaire pour réclamer son intervention, nouvelle circonstance évidemment très atténuante, Fuad Pacha déclare que, suivant les inspirations de sa conscience, les accusés sont assez sévèrement punis par la détention à perpétuité, peine dont le retentissement de ce procès et son caractère pour ainsi dire Diplomatique assurent la continuité. S'il dit qu'il a, contrairement à sa conscience, frappé de mort des fonctionnaires et des officiers, parce que les Représentants des Puissances étrangères demandaient leur tête, il assumerait à son tour une responsabilité telle, vis-à-vis de son Gouvernement, qu'en aucun cas il ne pourrait prendre cette résolution. En conséquence M. le Commissaire du

* This is a mistake, I do not require the two subordinates to be imprisoned for life; I merely confirm the Judgment of the Court.

† Yet, though he admits there is no evidence whatever against these, the Russian Commissioner proposed to class them with those condemned to death at Mokhtara, but whose sentences were to be commuted!

Sultan ne voit d'autre moyen de trancher la question que de confirmer purement et simplement les sentences, et d'en référer, pour leur exécution, à Constantinople.

M. le Commissaire Français fait observer que, si malgré les instances de la majorité de la Commission, son Excellence ne croit pas devoir user sur-le-champ de ses pleins-pouvoirs pour réviser dans le sens d'une aggravation la sentence du Tribunal, en ce qui concerne les officiers et fonctionnaires Ottomans, ses collègues et lui sont obligés de souscrire à cette démarche, et d'accepter les nouvelles lenteurs qu'elle entraîne. Mais par rapport aux Cheiks Druses la même difficulté n'existe pas, puisque sa tâche se bornerait à confirmer les sentences du Tribunal. M. le Commissaire de France pose à son Excellence la question de savoir si elle ne jugerait pas convenable de procéder immédiatement à leur exécution pour terminer au moins cette partie de la répression.

Son Excellence le Commissaire du Sultan se déclare prêt à obtempérer au désir formulé par M. le Commissaire de France. La pacification du Liban est ce qu'il a le plus à cœur, et il espère y arriver, ainsi qu'on l'a proposé, par l'emploi simultané de la répression qui corrige et de la clémence qui ramène. Plus heureux à l'égard des Druses qu'à l'égard des fonctionnaires Ottomans, il pourra peut-être donner dans une certaine mesure satisfaction aux opinions divergentes de ses collègues.

Il se propose de ratifier d'abord purement et simplement les sentences rendues tant à Beyrouth qu'à Mokhtara; mais avant de faire procéder aux exécutions, il accordera aux soixante-neuf condamnés à mort quelques jours de grâce, pendant lesquels ils seront admis à présenter de nouvelles défenses, et si des circonstances atténuantes, telles que celles indiquées ci-dessus, paraissent devoir être prises en considération, il atténuera ce que les sentences du Tribunal auraient pu avoir de trop rigoureux.

M. le Commissaire Français s'élève contre l'adoption de ce système, et exprime la crainte que l'œuvre de la répression ne soit complètement manquée. Nous avons, dit-il, devant nous trois catégories d'accusés :

- Les fonctionnaires et officiers Ottomans ;
- Les Cheiks Druses détenus à Beyrouth ;
- Et les Druses de rang inférieur détenus à Mokhtarrah.

Si le procès des premiers, ainsi qu'il a été dit, est renvoyé à Constantinople, si la sentence des seconds est confirmée, mais non exécutée sur-le-champ et soumise à une sorte de révision déguisée, si enfin la peine des Druses de Mokhtarrah est commuée en masse, ainsi qu'il a été convenu, il n'y a plus aucune répression.

Fuad Pacha fait observer que le principe de la répression est admis, et M. de Weckbecker que la répression peut avoir lieu sans la peine de mort. M. Novikow s'associe à la remarque de son collègue de France, et M. de Rehfuës exprime la crainte que la répression ne devienne tout-à-fait illusoire. Si après six mois d'efforts de la part du Tribunal et d'instances de la part de la Commission, Fuad Pacha admet de nouveaux délais, et contrairement à la sentence du Tribunal accepte le principe des circonstances atténuantes en faveur des Cheiks Druses, la répression disparaît de tous les côtés à la fois : aucune satisfaction éclatante n'est donnée à la justice, le malaise du pays se prolonge, et de nouveaux désordres sont rendus possibles. M. de Rehfuës croit devoir se prémunir contre un tel résultat.

M. le Commissaire Britannique, en se plaçant à un autre point de vue, ne saurait davantage approuver la marche indiquée plus haut par Fuad Pacha. Son Excellence propose de ratifier uniformément toutes les sentences, et de prononcer ensuite, partout où besoin serait, des commutations de peine ; ce qui, dans la pensée du Commissaire Ottoman, équivaudrait à une révision du jugement. Lord Dufferin regrette de ne pouvoir accepter cette manière de voir. Il est absolument nécessaire, selon lui, de distinguer entre une révision de sentence et une commutation de peine. La première permet à celui qui est innocent d'échapper à la condamnation, tandis que la seconde ne peut pas empêcher que le condamné n'ait été, pendant un moment, reconnu coupable. Or, il serait souverainement injuste de confondre les Cheiks Druses, détenus à Beyrouth, avec les criminels détenus à Mokhtarrah. Ceux-ci, reconnus coupables individuellement, mais à l'égard desquels Lord Dufferin renouvelle les réserves exprimées par lui dans une précédente séance, peuvent être l'objet d'une grâce inspirée par les besoins de la situation politique. Mais ceux-là ne peuvent être condamnés

à une peine quelconque par le seul fait qu'ils sont des Chefs, et sans que leur culpabilité ait été bien démontrée.*

La divergence d'opinion qui existe entre les différents membres de la Commission, par rapport aux Chefs Druses, se reproduisant de nouveau sur ce terrain, et une conciliation, par voie de discussion, semblant de toute façon impossible, M. le Commissaire d'Autriche émet l'avis que c'est à la source même de ce dissentiment qu'il faudrait remonter pour essayer de le faire disparaître. On diffère sur le principe, c'est-à-dire, sur le bien-fondé des preuves du procès, mais chaque opinion a été conçue de part et d'autre séparément. Chaque Commissaire a examiné individuellement les pièces du procès qui ont été communiquées. Peut-être une lecture collective et l'échange des idées et des appréciations qu'elle suggérerait, seraient-ils de nature à faciliter entre tous une certaine entente.

Lord Dufferin appuie cette proposition, et M. Novikow la considère comme un dernier effort de conciliation qu'il est au moins louable de tenter. M. de Rehfuës déclare se rallier à l'avis de la majorité, et M. Bécclard ne point s'opposer à cet expédient. Fuad Pacha propose d'introduire auprès de la Commission deux des membres du Tribunal qui pourront, s'il y a lieu, donner sur-le-champ des explications sur tel ou tel point. Cette seconde proposition est encore adoptée. M. le Commissaire de France demande toutefois la permission de faire observer que la Commission est sur le point de se transformer en cour de justice et de perdre son véritable caractère, celui d'une réunion diplomatique, chargée non pas de juger les coupables, mais de provoquer seulement leur punition. Cette réserve est admise par tous les Commissaires.

La séance est levée à six heures et demie.

(Suivent les signatures.)

Inclosure 4 in No. 523.

Protocol of the Twenty-fourth Meeting of the Syrian Commission, held at Beyrouth, March 2, 1861.

LE deux Mars, mil huit cent soixante-un, tous les Commissaires étant réunis à Beyrouth sous la présidence de Fuad Pacha, la séance est ouverte à midi.

Mehemed Ruschid Efendi et Abro Efendi, membres du Tribunal Extraordinaire de Beyrouth, sont introduits, et il est donné lecture de l'interrogatoire de Saïd Bey Jumblat, ainsi que des dépositions faites par les témoins à charge ou à décharge, et de diverses autres pièces jointes au dossier concernant cet accusé. A diverses reprises durant cette lecture, MM. les Commissaires font ressortir soit les lacunes qui se trouvent dans la procédure, soit les preuves qui leur semblent établir la culpabilité de l'accusé ou son innocence.

M. le Commissaire Britannique, après l'audition de cette longue procédure, ne veut pas prétendre que Saïd Bey Djumblat s'est conduit en héros, et qu'il a tenté ce qu'Abd-el-Kader n'a pas craint de faire à Damas. Mais ceci posé, il y a lieu de remarquer la faiblesse de toutes les preuves sur lesquelles le Tribunal appuie sa condamnation. Ce ne sont guère que des présomptions, et il est au moins étrange que si l'accusé a participé aux désordres de la Montagne, un Tribunal évidemment peu disposé à la bienveillance à son égard, n'ait pas pu recueillir en six mois une preuve certaine et autre chose que des accusations vagues des Chrétiens, c'est-à-dire, d'hommes tirés du camp opposé à sa nation. Il y a un fait qui résulte du procès avec évidence, c'est qu'au milieu d'une conflagration générale, où chacun devait suivre le parti de sa nationalité, Saïd Bey, bien loin de pousser à la lutte, s'est efforcé de rester neutre et d'observer une attitude très réservée. Lord Dufferin fait observer en outre que la duplicité des populations de ce pays étant peu commune, et l'époque où les témoignages furent entendus étant signalée par une grande surexcitation, il n'y a pas lieu, selon lui,

* To the twenty persons originally condemned to death at Mokhtara, Fuad Pacha had subsequently added thirty-eight other names, chosen in the most irregular manner out of the number of those against whom the military court-martial had already informed us no trustworthy evidence was forthcoming. His Excellency declared that other testimony had been subsequently obtained, but I doubt the accuracy of this statement. It is moreover certain that two of the principal members of the Court have not authorized the transfer, and, indeed, were ignorant of what was being done.

d'attacher une importance décisive aux dépositions des témoins à charge. Mais au contraire, le seul fait que plusieurs Chrétiens ont, à une pareille époque, déposé en sa faveur, est une des circonstances qui selon Lord Dufferin commande de réviser la sentence du Tribunal de Beyrouth. Pour ces diverses raisons, sa Seigneurie croit devoir persister dans l'opinion qu'elle a déjà émise à ce sujet.

M. de Weckbecker trouve que, par sa nationalité, Said Bey Djumblat était fatalement placé dans le camp opposé aux Chrétiens. Comme Mokatajji et homme influent, il a fait des efforts pour empêcher la guerre, et une première fois il y a réussi; s'il a été moins heureux la seconde fois, on doit lui savoir gré d'avoir encore osé recueillir chez lui un grand nombre de Chrétiens et les sauver, en bravant l'impopularité qui l'a un moment atteint. Il n'est nullement prouvé qu'il ait été instigateur à Hasbeya, ni complice à Deir-el-Kamar.

M. le Commissaire Français regrette que, malgré la recherche des circonstances atténuantes, à laquelle il vient de se livrer en faveur de Said Bey Djumblat, il ne puisse changer de conviction à son égard. En principe, la responsabilité de ces événements pèse sur les agents de l'autorité Ottomané; la responsabilité immédiate pèse sur les Chefs Druses influents: or, Said Bey était le plus influent de tous,* et rien certainement n'aurait pu se faire dans la Montagne sans son consentement. La morale publique exige une réparation. La seule circonstance qui put paraître favorable à l'accusé, c'est le secours qu'il a prêté à des Chrétiens, le refuge qu'il leur a donné. Mais d'autre part, la contrainte par laquelle il exige d'eux des certificats rend ce fait même très suspect, et permet de lui supposer une arrière-pensée. L'organisation sociale des Druses, où rien ne se fait sans l'aveu des Chefs, suffirait à prouver sa participation, au moins morale, dans les événements. A défaut d'un grand nombre de coupables et pour l'exemple, c'est parmi les Chefs les plus élevés que la justice doit frapper. M. Béchard ne peut donc modifier en rien l'opinion qu'il a émise précédemment au sujet de l'accusé, et il se borne à demander la confirmation pure et simple de la sentence du Tribunal.

M. le Commissaire Prussien, après la lecture de ce long interrogatoire, demeure convaincu que Said Bey Djumblat est le principal instigateur de la lutte qui a ensanglanté le Liban.† Plus fin, plus rusé que les autres, plus puissant aussi, il a pu cacher son jeu et s'assurer d'avance des certificats de bonne conduite, écrire des lettres qui présentent aujourd'hui son attitude sous un jour favorable; mais ces preuves, arrangées à l'avance, sont amplement contrebalancées par l'ensemble des témoignages et de l'instruction du procès. M. le Commissaire de Prusse réclame donc la confirmation du jugement qui condamne Said Bey à la peine de mort.

M. le Commissaire Russe, ayant à donner son opinion définitive sur un aussi grave sujet, croit devoir la motiver en entrant dans quelques détails. Il avait déjà dit précédemment, et la lecture qui vient d'être faite en commun prouve la justesse de cette impression, que le dossier du procès de Said Bey Djumblat, bien que le plus volumineux de tous, était cependant insuffisant pour établir une certitude judiciaire complète sur le rôle qu'il a joué dans les événements de l'année passée. M. le Commissaire Russe a donc dû rechercher, dans un ensemble de preuves morales, recueillies en dehors du procès, les éléments d'une conviction que l'enquête du Tribunal n'avait pas fait naître dans son esprit.

On a invoqué en faveur de Said Djumblat plusieurs circonstances. Le fait qu'il s'est remis spontanément entre les mains de l'autorité n'est pas concluant. Coupable ou innocent, qu'aurait-il pu faire? Fuir dans le Hauran comme un aventurier, en laissant derrière lui tous les avantages de sa position, en se privant à tout jamais des chances d'acquiescement, uniquement dans le but d'avoir la vie sauvée? C'eût été un faux calcul. En le supposant coupable, il était toujours dans son intérêt d'aller au devant de la justice, et de jouer le tout pour le tout, en faisant valoir les preuves qu'il s'était préparées à l'appui de son innocence.

Une de ces preuves, c'est son abstention de toute participation matérielle aux événements de la Montagne. Mais, si l'on suppose que toute sa conduite a été guidée par le plan préconçu d'aboutir à un acquiescement judiciaire, il a dû non seulement s'abstenir de toute participation à la guerre, mais encore se ménager l'apparence de quelques efforts pour l'empêcher. Judiciairement

* Said Bey was not all-powerful. He kept the peace in three out of his five Mokataas. The Druses are divided into two parties, and Said Bey was the head of only one of these parties.

† Yet M. de Relgues told me at this very sitting that he did not think the *procès-verbal* proved his guilt.

parlant, ce fait ne peut donc pas servir, pas plus que le premier, de circonstance atténuante en sa faveur. La seule circonstance de cette nature qui existe réellement, c'est le fait qu'il a sauvé la vie à de nombreux Chrétiens. Quelqu'intéressés que fussent ses motifs, il n'en est pas moins vrai que des centaines de Chrétiens ont été préservés par lui d'une mort certaine.

Après avoir rendu cet hommage à la vérité, M. Novikow passe à la question de savoir si Said Bey est réellement coupable ou non, et jusqu'à quel point il l'est. La voix publique et les conclusions du Tribunal le considèrent comme l'âme et le Chef occult du mouvement des Druses. M. Novikow partage ce point de vue. La guerre entre les Maronites et les Druses était en effet, aux yeux des uns et des autres, une guerre nationale, qui semblait devoir être décisive et dont l'enjeu était la possession de la Montagne.‡ Les rivalités de parti ont dû nécessairement se taire devant ce grand intérêt: on voit en effet que tous les Druses du Liban se sont étroitement unis entre eux et avec leurs compatriotes du Hauran. Said Djumblat pouvait-il rester en dehors de ce mouvement, lui qui était le plus considéré des Cheiks de sa nation, Chef d'un grand parti, Mokatajji héréditaire de cinq districts, le plus riche et le plus influent parmi ses compatriotes? On a établi une distinction de fond entre la guerre civile et les massacres. En effet les Chefs secondaires qui ont conduit leurs bandes à la guerre sont moins coupables que ceux qui les ont conduites au massacre. Mais Said Bey Djumblat n'appartient ni à l'une ni à l'autre de ces catégories. Il se trouvait dans une situation toute particulière. Du moment où il ne se mettait pas franchement en travers du mouvement des Druses, il en devenait forcément le Chef; et dans ce cas il assumait la responsabilité de toutes les conséquences de la guerre. Qu'il eût voulu ou non les massacres, que ses intérêts particuliers eussent été pour ou contre la guerre, peu importe; la même responsabilité qui pèse en principe sur le délégué du pouvoir Ottoman retombe en plein sur Said Bey Djumblat, dans la sphère de son influence et de ses attributions.

On trouve sous ce rapport, dans les pièces de l'instruction, la preuve de l'énorme influence que Said Bey Djumblat exerçait sur ses compatriotes au début comme à la fin de la guerre, et la lettre d'Ismail-el-Atracheh en est un indice très grave. On sait en outre qu'il distribuait des munitions aux Druses qui, avant d'aller à la guerre, passaient par Mokhtara. La déposition d'un témoin oculaire et assermenté, Youssouf-el-Hacqed, de Djezzine, ne laisse aucun doute à cet égard. Un autre témoin, Derviche Roza,§ juge Grec-Catholique de la Caïmacamie Druse, cité par Said Bey lui-même, a raconté qu'un simple écrit de ce dernier avait suffi, lors de la première attaque dirigée contre Deir-el-Kamar, pour dissiper un attroupement très considérable de Druses, appartenant à des Chefs divers, qui tous ont obéi à un ordre émané de lui.¶ Aucun des envois de Chrétiens qu'ils faisaient escorter par ses gens à Sayda ne fut inquiété par les Druses, et à la fin de la guerre il dominait si bien la situation au midi de la Montagne que Kourchid Pacha lui déluguait le soin de sauver le reste des Chrétiens à Deir-el-Kamar, et que le commandant de la garnison de cette ville lui délivrait un certificat de bonne conduite, afin d'obtenir qu'il veuille bien faire arriver sa famille saine et sauve à Sayda.‖

De nombreux témoins à charge ont déposé dans la cause de Said Djumblat. Il a été accusé, à diverses reprises, des plus grands crimes: d'avoir endormi les Chrétiens dans une fausse sécurité; d'avoir provoqué les massacres de Deir-el-

* What right have we to suppose all this? When the war broke out, how could Said Bey have foretold the investigation which is now taking place?

† M. Novikow recognizes the war, admits that the Christians commenced it, and states that it was made with a view to obtain possession of the Mountain.

‡ These are the only two witnesses who, according to M. Novikow himself, have really stated anything positively incriminating Said Bey. The fact of the Druses getting powder from him, even if proved, which it is not, would hardly be of much moment, but many other witnesses deny the possibility of this circumstance. Derviche Roza is a man in regard to whose evidence Mr. Noel Moore wrote the following note:—"With reference to the evidence of Derviche Roza, that individual spoke in such an excited and exaggerated strain, and indulged in such personalities against Said Bey, that his testimony should be accepted with due reserve. The Court remarked upon this circumstance." The fact of his stating that he saw 15 000, when there could not have been more than 2,000, and that 300 persons were killed, when it is known that only 30 perished, stamps the character of his testimony.

§ The fact alluded to regards the first attack on Deir-el-Kamar, before real commencement of the war, when Said Bey was really master of the situation.

‖ Nothing could be more natural than this in the disturbed state of the country. Said Bey might be able to assure the safety of individuals after all was over, though unable to stem the fury of the original outbreak.

Kamar, de Hasbeya, du couvent de Deir-Moukhallis, de n'avoir pas été étranger à ceux de Sayda. Chacun de ces chefs d'accusation eut été accablant pour Said Bey, si les témoins qui les ont portés avaient déposé soit de vue, soit d'ouïe, et en pleine connaissance de cause. Mais le plupart de ces témoignages ne sont basés que sur la voix publique ou sur les indications de tiers qui, pour diverses raisons, n'ont pu comparaître devant le Tribunal. Les chefs d'accusation relatifs aux massacres de Sayda et de Deir Moukhallis n'ont même été touchés qu'incidemment par le Tribunal. L'évidence judiciaire de la culpabilité personnelle ne jaillit donc pas des pièces mêmes du procès. Des témoins, tant Chrétiens que Musulmans, ont été cités à la demande de l'accusé.

Or, les témoins Musulmans, tout en faisant son éloge, se prononcent sur sa conduite pendant les événements d'une manière très-réservée. Ils ont déclaré qu'il n'a pas pris personnellement part à la guerre; que, selon les apparences, elle ne s'est pas faite d'après sa volonté; qu'il a sauvé un grand nombre de Chrétiens; mais la plupart ajoutent que Dieu seul connaît la vérité.*

Quant aux témoins Chrétiens à décharge, quelques-uns d'entr'eux ont imputé à Said Bey tous les malheurs de la Montagne, qu'il aurait eu, disaient-ils, le pouvoir d'empêcher, s'il l'avait voulu; d'autres enfin l'ont accusé d'avoir été personnellement l'instigateur des massacres, et chose étrange, ce sont ceux-là mêmes auxquels il avait sauvé la vie et qui avaient pu observer son attitude pendant leur séjour à Mokhtara.

Il découle en outre de la déposition des Chrétiens réfugiés chez Said Bey que les certificats signés par eux et cités en sa faveur ont été le résultat d'une contrainte morale.

Le chef d'accusation le plus grave porté contre lui, est celui d'avoir organisé les massacres de Hasbeya, en y envoyant Ali Hamadé avec la mission ostensible d'en ramener sa sœur Naïfé.

La vénération toute particulière dont les Druses de l'Anti-Liban entourent le nom de Saïd Djoumblat; les rapports suivis de correspondances et de messages qui existaient entre lui et sa sœur Naïfé; l'influence qu'elle exerçait incontestablement sur la garnison Ottomane de cette ville, qui a livré les Chrétiens aux Druses; l'arrivée presque simultanée d'Ali Hamadé et de Guendj-Aamad à Hasbeya, envoyés, le premier de Mokhtara par Saïd Djoumblat,† pour ramener sa sœur; le second de Damas par le Seraskier Ahmet Pacha, pour amener les Emirs et les Chrétiens de Hasbeya, et qui, au lieu de remplir leur mission, dirigent l'un et l'autre les massacres de cette ville; l'entourage d'Ali Hamadé composé en partie de serviteurs intimes de Saïd Djoumblat, qui prennent une part active aux massacres, et qui certes n'auraient pas osé le faire sans un encouragement de la part de leur maître: toutes ces données constituent à la charge de Saïd Djoumblat un ensemble de preuves de nature à établir sa culpabilité.

En résumé, le Commissaire Russe est d'avis que Saïd Bey Djoumblat a encouru la plus grave responsabilité dans les événements de 1860, et qu'il y a lieu de confirmer le jugement porté contre lui par le Tribunal Extraordinaire de Beyrouth.

Lord Dufferin, en prenant acte de ce que M. Novikow a dit qu'une certitude judiciaire de la culpabilité personnelle de Saïd Bey ne résultait point des pièces du procès, ne croit pas d'un autre côté pouvoir admettre qu'il soit loisible à chacun des Commissaires de faire entrer dans la discussion des bruits publics, des correspondances, des témoignages, en un mot, des faits d'aucune nature qui ne seraient point authentiques, et n'auraient point été appréciés suivant les règles ordinaires de la procédure. Les pièces du procès, recueillies judiciairement, authentiquement communiquées, voilà, selon Lord Dufferin, la seule base possible de l'espèce de révision collective du procès à laquelle les Commissaires se livrent ensemble en ce moment. Si chacun d'eux appuie son opinion personnelle sur des faits que lui seul peut apprécier, il semble alors au Commissaire Britannique que toute entente demeure plus que jamais impossible.

En ce qui concerne les témoignages des Chrétiens, seuls témoignages qui aient été recueillis, sans prétendre leur refuser toute valeur, Lord Dufferin ne croit pas non plus que, par cela seul que les témoins Chrétiens ont été assermentés, leur serment doive être considéré comme une garantie absolue de véracité.‡

* A proverbial expression, implying an unfavourable insinuation.

† This is pure conjecture.

‡ M. Novikow said he considered it sacrilege to doubt a direct statement made on oath by a Christian.

Fuad Pacha constate avec regret que l'espèce de révision du procès, à laquelle la Commission vient de se livrer, n'a abouti à aucun résultat, et que les deux opinions qui s'étaient produites ne sont pas moins divergentes qu'auparavant.

M. le Commissaire de France rappelle qu'il n'avait accepté la proposition de M. de Weckbecker que sur réserve et comme un expédient auquel les Commissaires, à bout de ressources pour s'entendre, devaient faire appel. En réalité la Commission n'a pas pu se constituer en Tribunal. La justice dans l'Empire Ottoman doit être rendue et a été rendue dans l'espèce par un Tribunal Ottoman. Le rôle des Commissaires consiste uniquement à provoquer l'action de la justice locale. Les sentences ont été rendues, et des avis émis au sujet de ces sentences. C'est au Plénipotentiaire Ottoman qu'il appartient de leur donner ou non force exécutoire.

Il résulterait, selon Lord Dufferin, de ce que vient de dire M. Bécлар, que la Commission aurait eu tort de prendre même connaissance des dossiers.

M. de Weckbecker explique la proposition qu'il avait fait dans la précédente séance. Avant de manifester leur dissentiment, les Commissaires, selon lui, devaient, en conscience, employer tous les moyens qui s'offraient à eux de se mettre d'accord.

Son Excellence Fuad Pacha expose que, dans l'état de la question, un tribunal ayant rendu régulièrement des sentences ou mazbatas, comme représentant du pouvoir exécutif, il n'a qu'à les confirmer tant pour les Chefs Druses que pour les fonctionnaires et officiers Ottomans. Mais, eu égard à la divergence d'opinion qui s'est manifestée dans le sein de la Commission, il ajournera toute autre mesure ultérieure jusqu'à ce qu'il ait reçu, sur l'ensemble de la question, les ordres de son Gouvernement. C'est là, dit-il, la seule issue qui s'offre à lui pour résoudre cette difficulté. Toutefois, il réclame encore à ce sujet l'avis de la Commission.

M. le Commissaire de France déclare que, du moment où le Plénipotentiaire Ottoman ne croit pas devoir exécuter immédiatement les sentences du tribunal concernant les Chefs Druses, il ne reste aux membres de la Commission qu'à souscrire à la décision qui vient de leur être notifiée.

Son Excellence ajoute que, confirmant tous les mazbatas rendus, elle va seulement donner suite à ceux qui sont relatifs aux détenus de Mokhtara condamnés à des peines de second ordre, et au sujet desquels aucune divergence d'opinion ne s'est produite.

La séance est levée à 7 heures et demie.

(Suivent les signatures.)

TABLE of Prisoners, with their Sentences; and showing the Opinion of the Commissioners on their respective cases.

Prisoners.	M. Bédard's Opinion.	Lord Dufferin's Opinion.	M. de Weckbecker's Opinion.	M. de Rehues' Opinion.	M. Novikow's Opinion.	Sentences of the Tribunal.
Khorsbid Pasha	Death	Death	Perpetual imprisonment.	Death	Death	Perpetual imprisonment.
Tahir Pasha	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto.
Nouri Bek	Ditto	Recommended to mercy.	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto.
Wasfi Effendi	Ditto	Confirmation of sentence.	Acquitted	Ditto	Perpetual imprisonment.	Temporary imprisonment and perpetual deprivation of rank.
Ahmed Effendi	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Detention for life	Ditto	Ditto.
Said Bek Joumblat	Recommended to mercy on account of old age	Acquitted	Ditto	Recommended to mercy	Recommended to mercy	Death.
Hussein Talhouk	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto.
Assad Talhouk	Death	Ditto	Ditto	Death	Declines opinion	Ditto.
Kassim Neked	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Declines opinion	Ditto.
Assad Amad	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Declines opinion	Ditto.
Mir Mohamed Kassim Rossian	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto.
Selim Joumblat	Ditto	Recommended to mercy	Ditto	Ditto	Declines opinion	Ditto.
Jemel-el-Din Hamadan	Ditto	Ditto	Declines opinion	Ditto	Declines opinion	Ditto.
Mehied-din-Shibli	Ditto	Death	Revision of trial	Recommended to mercy	Declines opinion	Ditto.
Ali Said	Recommended to mercy	Recommended to mercy	Death	Death	Death	Ditto.
Beshir Meri..	Death	Death	Death	Death	Death	Ditto.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, March 7, 1861.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith for your Excellency's information, a list of Druses condemned to death by what his Excellency Fuad Pasha terms "a summary process."

The evidence against twenty-two of these persons was considered convincing by Mr. Vice-Consul White and by Colonel Fraser, who was allowed to take cognizance of the proceedings of the court-martial who condemned them; and it appears they may be numbered amongst the most savage of their nation, some of them having butchered, in cold blood, dozens of Christians.

Many of them are Sheikhs and persons of influence, and I am sometimes almost tempted to think that if all of these persons were allowed indiscriminately to profit by the act of grace which is recommended by the British and French Governments, the consequence might be the reverse of what is intended.

In this country of blood-feuds, it is considered incumbent on the next of kin to remedy, by his personal interposition, any laxity of the criminal law, and the habit of "vendettas" has been created by the absence of more legitimate punishment.

If then, all these recognized assassins are suffered to escape without any graver punishment than imprisonment, the relatives of those they have slaughtered may think it necessary to satisfy their vengeance on some innocent member of the murderer's family, and the origin of future atrocities may be thus engendered.

On the other hand, I am so loth to counsel any unnecessary severity, that if it should be considered expedient not to exceed the limits agreed on by the Cabinets of London and Paris, I should be disposed to recommend that the punishment of death should be declared altogether inapplicable on the present occasion, as the effect of the execution of one or two persons would be nugatory and their death useless, either as a satisfaction to the Christians, or a warning to the Druses.

With regard to those in the accompanying Table against whose names there is no marginal reference, I have every reason to believe that their condemnation has been irregular and unjust. Six of them have been imprisoned for five months in Beyrout, and the *procès-verbaux* of their trials have never been communicated to the Commission, in fact they have not been examined: why should they be dealt with in so summary a manner? Another six have been condemned because they did not surrender when summoned to take their trial, a very small aggravation of their crime under present circumstances; and the remaining twenty-six have been arbitrarily removed from the first to the second category by only a portion of the Court that tried them, two of its members, one of them Hasan Bek, Colonel O'Reilly, being quite ignorant of what was being done. Fuad Pasha assures me that the subsequent testimony on which these additional condemnations took place was convincing, but I have reason to be dissatisfied with this statement, and I informed his Excellency officially that I could not recognize such an irregular mode of procedure. He has, consequently, consented to submit this Table also to a revision by his Government, and I sincerely trust they will refrain from confirming sentences of death passed in this wholesale manner, by a portion only of the court-martial, which had expressly announced to us, that the entire want of evidence precluded it from placing among the criminals of the first category those very names they have now placed there.

I have, &c.

(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

No. 524.

Lord J. Russell to Lord Dufferin.

(No. 78.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, March 27, 1861.

I HAVE received your Lordship's despatch No. 80 of the 10th instant, explaining the course which you pursued in regard to the trial of the Druse prisoners and their condemnation, and I have to acquaint you that Her Majesty's Government approve your proceedings in those matters.

I am, &c.

(Signed) J. RUSSELL.

No. 525.

Lord Dufferin to Lord J. Russell.—(Received March 28.)

(No. 81.)

My Lord,

Beyrout, March 15, 1861.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith copies of further despatches which I have this day addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople.

I have, &c.

(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 525.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, March 15, 1861.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that in addition to sixty-eight Druses whose cases have been referred to Constantinople, and certain others whom Fuad Pasha proposes to imprison here, there are a body of about 150 or 200 more he has determined to transport to Tripoli.

At first it was his Excellency's intention to send them to Constantinople or some other locality in that neighbourhood, but I ventured to suggest the propriety of their being sent to an Arab-speaking country.

Although it is very probable that most of these persons were engaged in the disturbances of the Mountain, and that some of them took part in the atrocities which followed, they cannot be considered as criminals in the legal acceptance of the term, inasmuch as very little evidence was produced against any of them.

At the same time, I am myself of opinion that it would be inadvisable to set them immediately at liberty. Some satisfaction must be given to the Christians, and if persons who are known to have dipped their hands up to their elbows in human blood are immediately allowed to return to the villages where the wives and children of their victims are residing, it would give rise to an amount of panic and clamour against the Government which might become extremely embarrassing.

On the other hand, it is revolting to the principles of every just man to allow any one to be punished whose guilt has not been fully proved; but any misgivings on this head have been considerably diminished by his Excellency assuring me that these persons are not to be treated as prisoners when they arrive, that due provision shall be made for their support there and for that of their families here, and that he has purposely refrained from affixing any term to the duration of their exile, in order that no obstacle may exist to their return to their own country whenever the present excitement shall have a little subsided. The climate, moreover, is healthy, as his Excellency has assured me, who was once there himself when attached to the army in a medical capacity, and at no great distance from the shore rise a chain of mountains not unlike the Lebanon.

In addition to these securities, which humanity has induced me to insist

upon, I have the satisfaction of reflecting that Tripoli is close to Malta, and that our Consul will always be able to prevent these unfortunate persons from sharing the fate of the Circassian emigrants into Turkish territory.

I will send your Excellency further particulars by next mail.

I have, &c.

(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 2 in No. 525.

Lord Dufferin to Sir H. Bulwer.

Sir,

Beyrout, March 15, 1861.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Excellency's information, copy of the Protocol of the twenty-fifth sitting of the Syrian Commission held on the 5th instant.

I have, &c.

(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure 3 in No. 525.

Protocol of the Twenty-fifth Meeting of the Syrian Commission, held at Beyrout, March 5, 1861.

LE cinq Mars, mil huit cent soixante-un, tous les Commissaires étant réunis à Beyrout sous la présidence de Fuad Pacha, la séance est ouverte à midi.

Les procès-verbaux des 22^{me}, 23^{me}, et 24^{me} séances ayant été lus et adoptés dans une réunion exclusivement consacrée à cet objet, Fuad Pacha propose à MM. les Commissaires de passer immédiatement à la discussion du projet d'indemnité relatif à Damas, et récemment envoyé de Constantinople.

Lord Dufferin demande la permission de faire auparavant des réserves formelles et explicites au sujet des nouvelles condamnations à mort prononcées contre des détenus de Mokhtara. Déjà, lorsque la Commission a été d'avis que le chiffre de vingt condamnations ne remplissait pas le but politique qu'on se proposait, Lord Dufferin avait eu soin de faire connaître que, tout en ne s'opposant point à l'émission de cet avis, il ne croyait pas toutefois que la Commission pût engager un Tribunal à frapper de mort dans un but politique des hommes dont la culpabilité ne serait point parfaitement démontrée au point de vue judiciaire. Il vient d'apprendre que les formalités de procédure dirigées contre les trente-huit nouveaux condamnés ont été encore plus contraaires aux règles ordinaires de la justice que celles qui avaient été suivies à l'égard des vingt premiers; que, notamment, ces trente-huit sentences de mort subséquentes avaient été prononcées, à Beyrout, par une partie seulement des juges de Mokhtara, et hors de la présence des accusés, qui n'ont pas pu se faire entendre. M. le Commissaire Britannique croit devoir en conséquence déclarer que ces nouvelles condamnations ne peuvent être considérées par lui comme ayant une valeur quelconque. Lord Dufferin demande ensuite à Fuad Pacha, si, par suite des décisions qui ont été prises dans les précédentes séances, il ne se propose point de mettre un terme aux inquiétudes et aux souffrances de la nation Druse, en lui faisant savoir qu'elle est désormais à l'abri de toute poursuite. Les nombreuses pétitions qu'il reçoit le portent à croire qu'une mesure de ce genre est impérieusement réclamée par l'état des esprits dans la Montagne.

Fuad Pacha répond que les formalités suivies pour les trente-huit nouvelles condamnations à mort sont celles d'une procédure extraordinaire. La Commission, y compris Lord Dufferin, avait été elle-même d'avis que la justice à rendre contre les Druses devait être sommaire, expéditive, militaire pour ainsi dire, et d'un caractère exceptionnel, comme les événements qui l'ont rendue nécessaire. On a suivi pour les Druses nouvellement condamnés exactement les mêmes formalités d'instruction que pour les vingt premiers.

Sur la seconde question son Excellence répond que l'idée d'une sorte d'amnistie judiciaire au profit de la nation Druse toute entière est loin d'être abandonnée. Mais il est clair qu'elle ne peut recevoir d'exécution qu'après la

clôture définitive de l'œuvre de répression. Or, la nécessité où Fuad Pacha se trouve d'en référer à Constantinople, et le caractère conditionnel des diverses propositions relatives à la répression, l'obligent à attendre les instructions de son Gouvernement. Il a toutefois donné à ses agents l'ordre de ne plus procéder dans la Montagne à aucune arrestation, et il a menacé de frapper d'un châtement exemplaire ceux d'entre les habitants qui chercheraient à se faire justice eux-mêmes par des représailles individuelles.

M. le Commissaire Russe pense que l'inquiétude et le malaise qui régnent encore dans la Montagne et notamment dans les environs de Racheya, seraient en partie calmés par un commencement de répression qui consisterait à exécuter les sentences qui infligent des peines de second ordre à un certain nombre des accusés de Mokhtara.

Fuad Pacha répond que l'on est actuellement en train de préparer par son ordre des mesures d'exécution. Quant aux habitants des environs de Racheya venus à Beyrouth, il a fait droit à leur réclamation, en envoyant dans leur pays de nouvelles troupes, et en adressant au nouveau Commandant des instructions très sévères pour le maintien de l'ordre.

M. de Rehfues est d'avis que, pour rétablir le calme dans la Montagne, il faudrait déployer une égale et très grande rigueur contre les Chrétiens et les Druses qui si livraient à des actes de représailles individuelles.

M. le Commissaire Français a appris que deux assassinats venaient d'être commis aux environs de Baalbek. Il demande que des poursuites soient dirigées contre les meurtriers et qu'ils soient frappés d'un châtement. Il persiste à croire, d'après ses propres renseignements, et malgré les pièces officielles récemment communiquées, que l'état des choses dans cette partie de la Syrie laisse beaucoup à désirer.

Fuad Pacha fera prendre de nouvelles informations sur l'état du pays, et a déjà ordonné des poursuites relativement aux deux assassinats qui viennent d'être signalés.

Son Excellence le Commissaire du Sultan fait part ensuite à la Commission des instructions qu'il a reçues de Constantinople au sujet de l'indemnité due aux habitants Chrétiens de Damas. La Porte a reconnu, comme la Commission, que le principe d'une somme fixe et déterminée à l'avance, à répartir ensuite entre les ayants-droit au prorata de leurs pertes, était le meilleur qu'on pût adopter. Mais, si la Porte est tombée d'accord avec la Commission sur le principe, elle s'en éloigne dans l'application. Au lieu de 150,000,000 de piastres que la Commission proposait de répartir entre les Chrétiens, la Porte serait d'avis, eu égard aux ressources dont elle croit pouvoir disposer, de s'en tenir au chiffre de 75,000,000 de piastres, dont le Gouvernement du Sultan se constituerait le débiteur vis-à-vis des Chrétiens, et qu'il leur paierait en six à-comptes semestriels, c'est-à-dire, dans le laps de trois années. Dans le plan arrêté à Constantinople, une imposition sur Damas et les environs serait le moyen employé pour faire face aux intérêts et à l'amortissement des sommes que le Gouvernement avancera.

M. le Commissaire d'Autriche est d'avis que, si l'arrêté de la Porte est définitif, toute discussion semble inutile. Si ce n'est qu'un projet, il doit dire que dans sa pensée le chiffre de 75,000,000 de piastres est insuffisant. En étendant les délais du paiement, la Porte pouvait élever le chiffre même de l'indemnité sans grand inconvénient. Elle pourrait même encore adopter ultérieurement le chiffre proposé par la Commission, en divisant le paiement en douze à-comptes semestriels. M. de Weckbecker fait remarquer en outre que le taux de l'argent dans la Montagne étant actuellement de deux et même trois pour cent par mois, toute lenteur apportée au paiement de l'indemnité occasionne pour les Chrétiens un surcroît de pertes considérables.

M. le Commissaire Français constate que la Porte, après avoir écarté le système proposé par la Commission, et paru donner la préférence à celui d'une enquête spéciale et judiciaire pour chaque individu, adhère maintenant au principe de la Commission, c'est-à-dire, à la fixation d'une somme totale déterminée à l'avance et à répartir ensuite entre tous les ayants-droit. Quant aux chiffres qu'elle a posés, M. Bécclard ne trouve pas qu'ils soient de nature à assurer aux Chrétiens une réparation suffisante des dommages qu'ils ont soufferts. 150,000,000 de piastres étaient dans la pensée de la Commission un minimum indispensable, et le terme de huit mois pendant lesquels la population Musulmane de Damas et des environs devait payer la portion de l'impôt mise à sa charge, était un délai suffisant pour les Musulmans et déjà très-long pour les Chrétiens.

La Commission avait été conduite à proposer ces chiffres par des recherches nombreuses et approfondies. Rien ne vient au contraire à l'appui des nouveaux chiffres présentés par la Porte. En conséquence, M. le Commissaire Français ne peut que persister dans l'opinion que d'accord avec ses collègues il a émise, il y a déjà trois mois, sur la question de l'indemnité. Mais quelle que soit la combinaison définitivement adoptée, il y a un point sur lequel il doit s'empresse de faire dès aujourd'hui les réserves les plus formelles, c'est qu'en aucune partie de l'Empire les populations Chrétiennes ne seront ni directement ni indirectement tenues de concourir au paiement de l'impôt d'indemnité. Il est bien entendu en effet que les Musulmans seuls doivent être soumis aux conséquences de la mesure financière quelle qu'elle soit, qui sera ultérieurement adoptée.

M. Bécclard demande en outre que des délégués Européens soient appelés à participer aux travaux de la Commission de répartition. Une telle mesure lui paraît être la conséquence nécessaire de la concession faite au Gouvernement local à l'égard des protégés, en faveur desquels le principe d'un arrangement particulier entre Fuad Pacha et les Commissaires respectifs n'a point été réservé.

Lord Dufferin ne voit aucune raison pour que la Commission revienne sur l'avis qu'elle a exprimé. 150,000,000 de piastres d'indemnités étaient le résultat du calcul le plus modéré auquel on pût se livrer sur les pertes subies par les Chrétiens de Damas, en ne comprenant encore dans cette évaluation ni bijoux, ni matières précieuses ni argent comptant. Quant aux délais fixés à la perception de l'impôt, Lord Dufferin a toujours été d'avis que la Commission s'était montrée trop rigoureuse à l'égard de Damas. Il est convaincu que, pour ne pas épuiser la force contributive de cette cité, on ne peut lui demander au plus que 10,000,000 de piastres par mois; mais en revanche il continue de croire que 40,000,000 n'excèdent pas la somme totale que Damas devrait fournir dans l'ensemble des ressources affectées au paiement de l'indemnité. Lord Dufferin est d'avis en outre que ce n'est pas sur la population, soit Musulmane, soit Chrétienne, de la province dans sa généralité, mais seulement sur Damas et les villages environnants compromis dans les désordres, que l'impôt pénal en question devrait porter.

M. le Commissaire Prussien rappelle que la Commission, en donnant son avis, il y a trois mois, sur cette question, avait été guidée par deux motifs: éviter les lenteurs d'une enquête judiciaire, et frapper Damas d'un impôt pénal. Les retards que le rappel de la Porte a entraînés dans le règlement de cette question ont déjà fait perdre aux Chrétiens tout le bénéfice du système qui n'avait été proposé que parce qu'il était sommaire et expéditif; et en ce qui concerne les Musulmans de Damas, la combinaison financière que propose la Porte n'a aucun rapport avec l'impôt pénal que la Commission avait en vue. M. de Rehfues ne cesse pas de croire que le plan d'indemnisation indiqué par la Commission était aussi expédient que modéré, et qu'il correspondait au minimum de ce que le Gouvernement Ottoman doit faire en faveur d'une population sujette du Sultan, et que la protection de son Souverain n'a pas empêchée d'être chassée de ses foyers, soumise aux plus horribles traitements, et réduite en masse à la plus extrême misère.

M. le Commissaire Russe déclare n'avoir presque rien à ajouter à toutes les idées justes qui viennent d'être exprimées par ses collègues. Il renouvelle pour son compte la réserve faite par M. Bécclard, et d'après laquelle les Chrétiens d'aucune localité ne doivent contribuer à la création des ressources nécessaires pour le paiement des 127,000,000, attribués dans le projet de la Commission aux victimes de Damas, abstraction faite de ce qui reviendrait aux établissements religieux indigènes, au sujet desquels le principe d'une enquête séparée a été et demeure admis d'un commun accord, les indemnités dues aux Consuls et nationaux étrangers seulement devant être l'objet d'un arrangement particulier entre Fuad Pacha et les Commissaires de chaque Puissance intéressée.

Son Excellence Fuad Pacha, manquant d'informations suffisantes pour soutenir contradictoirement, soit auprès de son Gouvernement, soit auprès de la Commission, l'un et l'autre des deux projets qui se trouvent en présence, va, dit-il, se rendre à Damas et y recueillir sur les lieux tous les renseignements dont il a besoin. Lors de son retour et même auparavant, s'il est nécessaire, il fera connaître à la Commission le résultat de son enquête.

Sur la proposition de M. Bécclard, appuyée unanimement par la Commission, M. le Commissaire Ottoman s'engage à faire payer immédiatement par la population Musulmane de Damas un premier à-compte de 12,500,000 piastres. Fuad

Pacha promet de dépasser même le chiffre de 12,500,000 piastres, s'il trouve que cela soit possible, et prie la Commission de vouloir bien s'en remettre à lui sur ce dernier point.

Il est bien entendu d'ailleurs que, dans la pensée de la Commission, ce paiement d'un premier à-compte ne préjugera rien sur la fixation ultérieure et définitive du chiffre total de l'indemnité. Il est en outre convenu qu'une fois le chiffre fixé et le tableau de répartition établi, les Chrétiens, devenant pour ainsi dire les créanciers du Gouvernement, seront payés dans les délais de rigueur, et qu'il leur sera même loisible de transférer à des tiers, pour se procurer l'argent dont ils auraient besoin avant l'expiration de ces délais, les titres de créance dont ils seront munis.

MM. les Commissaires des cinq Puissances se proposent de mettre à profit l'absence de Fuad Pacha, en préparant un projet de réorganisation du Liban, au sujet duquel ils devront ultérieurement s'entendre avec son Excellence, avant de le transmettre à leurs Cours respectives.

La séance est levée à quatre heures et demie.

No. 526.

Lord Dufferin to Lord J. Russell.—(Received April 4.)

(No. 83.)

My Lord,

Beyrout, March 23, 1861.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship copy of a communication which has been addressed to the European Commissioners by Bishop Tobia and three other Maronite Prelates, denying all cognizance of the denunciatory lists furnished to his Excellency Fuad Pasha, and stating that the 4,600 names inscribed thereon were taken from a mixed array of 30,000 Mussulmans, Metuali, and Druses, of the Hauran, as well as of the Lebanon.

As these assertions differ materially from the account of the transaction I have felt it my duty to convey to your Lordship, it is necessary I should recapitulate the facts of the case.

By a reference to the Protocol of the tenth sitting of the Commission, it will be seen that it was determined to try those of the Druse nation supposed to be implicated in the disturbances of the Mountain, by the summary process of a court-martial; that death was the sole penalty the Court was declared competent to pronounce; and that only those persons were to be put upon their trial who were supposed to have instigated or directed the massacres, or who were denounced, "par la voix publique," as more particularly notorious for the atrocity of their crimes.

This decision was then followed by a discussion as to how Fuad Pasha was to ascertain the names of those who would come within the above categories, as his Excellency had justly observed that it would be necessary "d'avoir presque exclusivement recours aux dépositions des Chrétiens, et qu'alors il en redoublerait le nombre; si on lui demande 1,000 ou 1,500 têtes, et s'il consente à les faire tomber, il craint de s'exposer à l'accusation d'être plus Druse que les Druses eux-mêmes, et de répondre à un massacre par une boucherie."

In order to avoid this danger, it was agreed that recourse should be had to the intervention of the Christian Bishop, through whose influence it was hoped the denunciations might be restrained within reasonable limits; and it was agreed, on the proposition of Fuad Pasha, "que les notables de chaque localité seront invités par lui à faire devant leurs Chefs spirituels, et sous la foi du serment, les dépositions qui, sans être dans la plupart oculaires, serviront cependant de bases aux mises en accusations."

From the letter of the Prelates themselves it would appear that in compliance with the arrangement thus come to, an interview took place upon the subject between themselves and the Turkish Commissioner, the result of which we find recorded in the Protocol of the 16th Conference.

Abro Efendi, a Christian, and Fuad Pasha's delegate to the Commission, "constate à son tour que la conduite des Prélats Chrétiens ne paraît pas avoir été inspirée par un sentiment de justice Chrétienne qui devrait la caractériser. Ils ont d'abord dénoncé 4,600 personnes. M. le Plénipotentiaire Ottoman a dû leur faire remarquer qu'il s'agissait uniquement de condamnations à mort, et que le chiffre de

leurs dénonciations n'était point en rapport avec la gravité de cette peine. Ils ont alors, sur l'invitation de son Excellence, divisé leur liste en trois catégories, comprenant seulement dans la première les noms de ceux qui doivent être condamnés au dernier supplice. Cette première catégorie renferme encore, au grand étonnement du Haut Commissaire du Sultan, les noms de 1,200 individus, parmi lesquels son Excellence, après avoir communiqué les projets de sentences, se trouvera dans le cas de faire exécuter seulement les plus coupables."

This statement of his delegate Fuad Pasha himself confirmed at the next meeting of the Commission (see 17th Protocol): "La Commission sait comment ces listes ont été dressées et quel nombre de dénonciations elles contiennent. Fuad Pacha entre dans de nouveaux détails à cet égard et confirme ceux qui ont déjà été donnés par Abro Efendi dans la précédente séance. Une première liste générale contenant 4,600 noms avait été dressée. Fuad Pacha, eu égard au système de pénalité qu'il a résolu d'adopter, conformément au vœu de la Commission, a cru devoir demander aux Evêques une liste des principaux coupables. Les Evêques ont alors dressé trois listes d'accusations graduées selon le degré apparent de la culpabilité. La première de ces listes contient encore 1,200 noms d'individus accusés comme organisateurs, chefs des bandes, ou assassins."

In the presence of such a sequence of facts, and considering the notorious influence exercised by the spiritual Chiefs of the Maronites over their co-religionists, it seems impossible to admit the assertion of Bishop Tobia and his colleagues that they were not cognizant of the lists in question. It is possible perhaps, that Fuad Pasha was not quite exact when he stated that they were "dressés par les Evêques." This operation would naturally be performed by the Christian notables, but that it was done with the knowledge and approval of the prelates in question can scarcely be questioned. Did any doubt exist upon the subject it would be set at rest by the following circumstance, the truth of which is vouched for by three persons who were present, two of them being Christians.

When Fuad Pasha required the number of denunciations to be reduced, it was for the Bishops as well as for the notables that he sent. The lists were canvassed in their presence; they took part in the discussion; and it was not until after a debate of upwards of three hours that his Excellency could obtain, not a reduction on the original figure of 4,600, but a division of that number into three classes: even so, 1,300 individuals remained still designated for death, and a person who was present, and took part in the discussion, states positively that when he hazarded a remonstrance against the enormous total, Bishop Tobia turned round on him, and said, "Hold your tongue, you'll spoil everything," or words to that effect.

It is now pretended that the names furnished to Fuad Pasha were merely "des renseignements propres à éclairer la justice," but the whole tenor of the proceedings I have narrated is inconsistent with such a supposition. If this had been the case how can we account for the subsequent refusal of the Christians to come forward with any supplementary evidence. Had the lists been regarded as nothing but a preliminary indication, a mere "renseignement," the obstinacy with which all further testimony was withheld from the Court-martial at Mokhtara becomes unaccountable, and it is known that on that occasion the Maronite notables acted in accordance with the advice of their spiritual Chiefs. Such an interpretation of the transaction is, in fact, a disingenuous after-thought, and reflects but little credit on those who invented it. In this country, blood for blood is a formula consecrated by immemorial usage. The lists in question were drawn up in accordance with it, and the Maronite Bishops, to put the most favourable construction upon their conduct, seem at all events to have sanctioned, if they did not encourage, the application of this horrible doctrine.

I would wish, however, particularly to mention that none of the above observations ought to be referred to the clergy of the Greek Church. Their conduct on this occasion has been most moderate and humane, and although the loss of life among the members of their congregation has been probably greater than that among the Maronites, they have denounced but comparatively few persons. It is also to be observed that they have not signed the document now under our consideration.

Before concluding, I will pause to examine another remarkable assertion contained in the communication of the Maronite prelates, as its extreme inexactitude will show with what caution their other statements ought to be received.

Referring to the proportion which the number of 4,600 might be supposed to bear to the total of those implicated in the late disturbances, the Maronite prelates state that the names in question are taken indiscriminately from a horde of Mussulmans, Metâwali, and of Druses, not merely of the two Lebanons, but also of the Hauran, and that, therefore it is unfair to represent it as a percentage on a population of 8,000 males. Now this assertion is simply untrue, and its falsehood is proved in the most obvious manner. The lists furnished to Fuad Pasha distinguish not only the nationality of each individual mentioned, but the name of the village of which he is an inhabitant. His Excellency Fuad Pasha has allowed me to have access to these lists, and they have been carefully examined by four persons. The result of this analysis, which has been repeated twice over, shows that the total of names sent in was not 4,600, but 4,946. Out of these 4,946 persons stated by the Bishops to represent a mingled array of Moslems, Metâwali, and Druses of the Lebanons and the Hauran, it appears that only 632 are Moslems or Metâwali, and that only four are inhabitants of the Hauran; the remaining 4,310 persons being Druses of the Lebanon.

According to the statistics which have been furnished to the Commission by the French and Austrian Consulates, but which the Austrian Consul and Commissioner tells me are not very accurate, it would appear that in Mount Lebanon Proper, there are no more than 5,000 taxable Druses, *i. e.*, males, above the age of 15. On referring to the documents appealed to by the Bishops themselves, it would appear that out of this adult male population of 5,000, the names of no less than 3,479 persons, or about two-thirds of the adult population, have found their way into the lists of the Christians.

Such, as far as I have been able to ascertain, are the exact facts connected with this transaction.

As the letter of the Maronite prelates contains an express allusion to myself, and as it is probable copies of that document will be forwarded to the Governments of Europe, I should esteem it a great kindness if your Lordship would allow the narrative contained in this despatch to be communicated to Her Majesty's Ambassadors at the Courts of the Five Powers.

I have, &c.

(Signed) DUFFERIN AND CLANEBOYE.

Inclosure in No. 521.

Petition.

A Messieurs les Membres de la Commission Internationale en Syrie.

C'EST avec affliction et douleur que nous avons lu dans "l'Indépendance Belge" du 11 Février l'article dont copie est ci-jointe. Si cet article calomnieux, appuyé sur les déclarations faites à la Chambre des Communes par Lord John Russell dans la séance du 8 Février, ne concernait que nous, nous ne nous serions point soucies de le refuter; mais il s'agit ici des populations Chrétiennes que l'on cherche à représenter comme indignes des sympathies que leurs malheurs leur ont attirées de la part du Gouvernement de Sa Majesté le Sultan et des Grandes Puissances Européennes, venues si généreusement à leur secours. C'est donc un devoir pour nous de rétablir les faits, et ce qui nous encourage à l'accomplir, c'est, que nous savons que nous n'en appelons point en vain aux souvenirs de son Excellence Fuad Pacha, à la loyauté de Lord Dufferin dont la pensée n'a pu être que mal interprétée, et aux sentiments de justice des Représentants des Puissances Européennes.

Lorsque son Excellence Fuad Pasha a dû s'occuper de la répression des Druses, il a réuni chez lui six Evêques Chrétiens et les a priés de lui faire connaître ceux des notables Chrétiens, hommes consciencieux et au courant des événements, qui pourraient lui donner des indications sur les coupables. Les Evêques firent observer que le caractère dont ils étaient vêtus leur interdisait de s'immiscer dans une question qui était du ressort exclusif de la justice. Fuad Pacha reconnut la justesse de cette observation et s'empessa d'ajouter qu'il ne leur demandait pas de se substituer à la justice, mais de désigner seulement quelques personnes capables de le bien renseigner. Les Evêques désignèrent alors seize Chrétiens laïques choisis parmi les plus honorables qui furent chargés par son Excellence de lui fournir les renseignements dont elle avait besoin et qui

s'engagèrent par serment à ne dire que la vérité. Ces notables remirent quelques jours après à son Excellence une liste nominative de 4,600 Druses, Musulmans, et Métoualis habitant le Liban, l'Anti-Liban, et le Hauran, et pris parmi 30,000 combattants et non pas seulement parmi 8,000 Druses comme le prétend "l'Indépendance Belge," en indiquant la nature des crimes qui étaient reprochés à chacun des individus compris dans la liste. Son Excellence fit de nouveau appeler les Evêques pour leur dire qu'elle savait fort bien que tous les Druses étaient criminels, mais que le nombre désigné à la justice était trop considérable, et qu'il fallait se borner à désigner les plus coupables. Les Evêques répondirent qu'ils n'avaient connaissance ni de la liste ni des individus qui y étaient portés, et que vu leur caractère il ne leur convenait point de se mêler de cette affaire. Mais les seize notables Chrétiens appelés de nouveau par Fuad Pasha, répondirent que la liste qu'ils avaient remise sur son ordre n'était qu'un renseignement propre à éclairer la justice, et que bien certainement ni eux ni la population Chrétienne ne songeaient à demander que la répression atteignît un aussi grand nombre de victimes. Toutefois sur la demande de son Excellence ils réduisirent alors la liste à 1,200 des plus compromis, laissant à la justice le soin d'établir leur culpabilité et au Gouvernement celui de fixer l'étendue et le nombre des châtimens.

Les Evêques n'ont point eu à se mêler de la répression, et les notables n'ont eu pour mission que de fournir à titre de renseignements les indications que son Excellence avait elle-même demandées. Quant au document dont il a été parlé à la Chambre des Communes les Evêques soussignés déclarent qu'ils n'ont jamais signé une pièce de cette nature et qu'on serait dans l'impossibilité d'en produire aucune.

Tels sont les faits; en les rappelant au souvenir de la Commission, les Evêques soussignés osent lui demander, au nom des Chrétiens auxquels on cherche à enlever par cette étrange calomnie les sympathies du monde civilisé, de vouloir bien faire connaître cette déclaration à leurs Gouvernements respectifs et de la livrer à la publicité afin que l'intérêt dont les Chrétiens de Syrie sont l'objet ne puisse être amoindri par la pensée qu'ils ont pu s'en montrer indignes.

Beyrouth, le 15 Mars, 1861.

(Signé)

TOBIA AOUN, Evêque de Beyrouth.

BOTROS BOSTANI, Evêque de St. Jean d'Acre.

BASILIOS CHAHAT, Evêque de Zahlé et Beca.

MATATHIOS, Evêque de Baulbec et Dépendances.